

Health Reform To Be Introduced Carefully--I fully believe that the end of all things is at hand, and every power that God has given us should be employed in the very wisest and highest service to God. The Lord has brought out a people from the world to fit them not only for a pure and holy heaven, but to prepare them through the wisdom He shall give them to be co-laborers with God in preparing a people to stand in the day of God. [Cf: 2MR103.02] p. 1, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Great light has been given upon health reform, but it is essential for all to treat this subject with candor and to advocate it with wisdom. In our experience we have seen many who have not presented health reform in a manner to make the best impression upon those whom they wish should receive their views. The Bible is full of wise counsel, and even the eating and drinking receive proper attention. The highest privilege that man can enjoy is to be a partaker of the divine nature, and faith that binds us in strong relationship to God will so fashion and mold mind and conduct that we become one with Christ. No one should through intemperate appetite so indulge his taste as to weaken any of the fine works of the human machinery and thus impair the mind or the body. Man is the Lord's purchased possession. [Cf: 2MR103.03] p. 1, Para. 2, [1881MS].

If we are partakers of the divine nature, we will live in communion with our Creator and value all of God's work which led David to exclaim, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 119:14). We will not consider the organs of the body our own property, as if we had created them. All the faculties God has given to the human body are to be appreciated. "Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:19, 20). [Cf: 2MR103.04] p. 1, Para. 3, [1881MS].

We are not to treat unwisely one faculty of mind, soul, or body. We cannot abuse any of the delicate organs of the human body without having to pay the penalty because of transgression of nature's laws. Bible religion brought into practical life insures the highest culture of the intellect. [Cf: 2MR104.01] p. 1, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Temperance is exalted to a high level in the Word of God. Obeying His Word we can rise higher and still higher. The danger of intemperance is specified. The advantage to be gained by temperance is laid open before us all through the Scriptures. The voice of God is addressing us, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). [Cf: 2MR104.02] p. 1, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The example of Daniel is presented for us to study carefully and learn the lessons that God has for us to learn in this example given us in sacred history. [Cf: 2MR104.03] p. 1, Para. 6, [1881MS].

We wish to present temperance and health reform from a Bible standpoint, and to be very cautious not to go to extremes in abruptly advocating health reform. Let us be careful not to graft into health reform one false shoot according to our own peculiar over-strained ideas and weave into it our own strong traits of character, making these as the voice of God, and passing judgment on all who do not see as we do. It takes time to educate away from wrong habits. [Cf: 2MR104.04] p. 1, Para. 7, [1881MS].

Questions are coming in from brethren and sisters making inquiries in regard to health reform. Statements are made that some are taking the light in the testimonies upon health reform and making it a test. They select statements made in regard to some articles of diet that are presented as objectionable--statements written in warning and instruction to certain individuals who were entering or had entered on an evil path. They dwell on these things and make them as strong as possible, weaving their own peculiar, objectionable traits of character in with these statements and carry them with great force, thus making them a test, and driving them where they do only harm. [Cf: 2MR104.05] p. 2, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The meekness and lowliness of Christ is wanting. Moderation and caution are greatly needed, but they have not these desirable traits of character. They need the mold of God upon them. And such persons may take health reform and do great harm with it in prejudicing minds so that ears will be closed to the truth. [Cf: 2MR105.01] p. 2, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Health reform, wisely treated, will prove an entering wedge where the truth may follow with marked success. But to present health reform unwisely, making that subject the burden of the message, has served to create prejudice with unbelievers and to bar the way to the truth, leaving the impression that we are extremists. Now, the Lord would have us wise and understanding as to what is His will. We must not give occasion for us to be regarded [as] extremists. This will place us and the truth God has given us to bear to the people, at a great disadvantage. Through weaving in unconsecrated self, that which we are ever to present as a blessing becomes a stumbling block. [Cf: 2MR105.02] p. 2, Para. 3, [1881MS].

We see those who will select from the testimonies the strongest expressions and, without bringing in or making any account of the circumstances under which the cautions and warnings are given, make them of force in every case. Thus they produce unhealthy impressions upon the minds of the people. There are always those who are ready to grasp anything of a character which they can use to rein up people to a close, severe test, and who will work elements of their own characters into the reforms. This, at the very outset, raises the combativeness of the very ones they might help if they dealt carefully, bearing a healthful influence which would carry the people with them. They will go at the work, making a raid upon the people. Picking out some things in the testimonies, they drive them upon everyone, and disgust rather than win souls. They make divisions when they might and should make peace. [Cf: 2MR105.03] p. 2, Para. 4, [1881MS].

I have been shown the danger of families that are of an excitable temperament, the animal predominating. Their children should not be allowed to make eggs their diet, for this kind of food--eggs and animal flesh--feeds and inflames the animal passions. This makes it very difficult for them to overcome the temptation to indulge in the sinful practice of self-abuse, which in this age is almost universally practiced. This practice weakens the physical, mental, and moral powers and bars the way to everlasting life. [Cf: 2MR106.01] p. 2, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Some families were shown me as in a deplorable condition. Because of this debasing sin, they are where the truth of God cannot find access to heart or mind. This practice leads to deception, to falsehood, to licentious practices, and to the corrupting and polluting of other minds, even of very young children. The habit once formed is more difficult to overcome than the appetite for liquor or for tobacco. [Cf: 2MR106.02] p. 3, Para. 1, [1881MS].

These evils, so prevalent, led me to make the statements that I have made. The special reproofs were presented in warning to others; thus they come before other families than the very individuals corrected and reproofed. But let the testimonies speak for themselves. Let not individuals gather up the very strongest statements, given for individuals and families, and drive these things because they want to use the whip and to have something to drive. Let these active, determined temperaments take the Word of God and the testimonies, which present the necessity of forbearance and love and perfect unity, and labor zealously and perseveringly. With their own hearts softened and subdued by the grace of Christ, with their own spirits humble and full of the milk of human kindness, they will not create prejudice, neither will they cause dissension and weaken the churches. [Cf: 2MR106.03] p. 3, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The question whether we shall eat butter, meat, or cheese, is not to be presented to anyone as a test, but we are to educate and to show the evils of the things that are objectionable. Those who gather up these things and drive them upon others, do not know what work they are doing. The Word of God has given tests to His people. The keeping of God's holy law, the Sabbath, is a test, a sign between God and His people throughout their generations forever. Forever this is the burden of the third angel's message--the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. [Cf: 2MR107.01] p. 3, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Tea, coffee, tobacco, and alcohol we must present as sinful indulgences. We cannot place on the same ground, meat, eggs, butter, cheese and such articles placed upon the table. These are not to be borne in front, as the burden of our work. The former--tea, coffee, tobacco, beer, wine, and all spirituous liquors--are not to be taken moderately, but discarded. The poisonous narcotics are not to be treated in the same way as the subject of eggs, butter, and cheese. In the beginning animal food was not designed to be the diet of man. We have every evidence that the flesh of dead animals is dangerous because of disease that is fast becoming universal, because of the curse resting more heavily in consequence of the habits and crimes of man. We are to present the truth. We are to be guarded how to use reason and select those articles of food that will make the very best blood and keep the blood in an unfevered condition.--Ms 5, 1881. (Entire Ms, "Proper Use of the Testimonies on Health Reform," March 23, 1881.) [Cf: 2MR107.02] p. 3, Para. 4, [1881MS].

He just went to sleep; no pain, no suffering, just as pleasant as a child he breathed his last. Oh, how thankful I was that I was not compelled to see him tortured with agony and have this distressing picture before me day and night. . . . [Cf: 2MR249.06] p. 3, Para. 5, [1881MS].

He looked from the first as though he had lain down to sleep like a

tired warrior. . . . [Cf: 2MR249.07] p. 4, Para. 1, [1881MS].

I will not give myself to abandonment of grief. . . . I will not complain or murmur at the providence of God. Jesus is my Saviour. He lives. He will never leave me nor forsake me. . . . [Cf: 2MR250.01] p. 4, Para. 2, [1881MS].

I feel grateful to God that I was not left to look for my consolation in the friendship of the world. Rely upon human sympathy! No, no. . . . Even the valley of the shadow of death was lighted by the presence of my Saviour.--Letter 9, 1881, pp. 1-5. (To "Dear Brother and Sister," Oct. 20, 1881.) [Cf: 2MR250.02] p. 4, Para. 3, [1881MS].

I feel so grateful to my heavenly Father that He has given us so precious evidences of His willingness to bless and impart to us wisdom.--Letter 14, 1881, p. 2. (To Uriah Smith, c. 1881.) [Cf: 2MR250.03] p. 4, Para. 4, [1881MS].

May, my dear child, I do not wish you to overwork, but I want you to be prompt, and bear your share of responsibility. Those who do work only when compelled to do so will be worthless. You can do work with cheerfulness and not wait to be told. Be faithful in little things, and then it will be easy for you to be faithful in larger things. Remember that there are duties for you to perform just as important to perfect your experience as the duties those older have to do to perfect their experience. Do your work, not as though it was a burden, but a pleasure, as though done for Jesus. Your Saviour was an obedient child, working with His father at the simple trade of a carpenter. You must eat and drink in order to live, and then, as a natural result, the dishes must be washed, floors swept, if you live in houses. Now act your part with fidelity, doing your work for Jesus.--Letter 3, 1881, pp. 2, 3. (To "Dear Children, Addie and May Walling," April 15, 1881.) [Cf: 4MR94.04] p. 4, Para. 5, [1881MS].

We endured the journey to Des Moines well. There were omnibuses but no carriage for me, as we were not expected. We dragged up four miles to the camp ground, walking every step. The fairground was our encampment. Certainly it was the most beautiful spot for camp meeting we have ever occupied.-- Letter 6, 1881, p. 1. (To Edson and Emma White, June 16, 1881.) [Cf: 4MR95.01] p. 4, Para. 6, [1881MS].

Brother John, you do not know me. The more trying the situation, the more fortitude I possess. [Cf: 5MR173.03] p. 4, Para. 7, [1881MS].

I shall give way to no outbursts of grief if my heart break. I serve God not impulsively but intelligently. I have a Saviour who will be to me a very present help in time of trouble. I am a Christian. I know in whom I have believed. He expects from me implicit unwavering submission. Undue grief is displeasing to God. [Cf: 5MR173.04] p. 4, Para. 8, [1881MS].

I take up my appointed cross and will follow the Lord fully. I will not give myself to abandonment or grief. I will not yield to a morbid and melancholy state of feeling. I will not complain or murmur at the providence of God. Jesus is my Saviour. He lives. He will never leave me nor forsake me.--Letter 9, 1881, p. 3. (To "Dear Brother and Sister," October, 1881.) [Cf: 5MR173.05] p. 4, Para. 9, [1881MS].

I miss father more and more. Especially do I feel his loss while here in the mountains. I find it a very difficult thing being in the mountains with my husband and [now] in the mountains without him. I am fully of the opinion that my life was so entwined or interwoven with my husband's that it is about impossible for me to be of any great account without him.--Letter 17, 1881, p. 1. (To "Dear Son Willie" [W. C. White], September 12, 1881.) [Cf: 5MR174.04] p. 5, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The *Signs* is a good paper, never to be exalted as superior to our church paper among our people or to take the place of the church paper. This paper was first in the field and when there is a spirit of competition manifested, it is all wrong and displeasing to God. The *Signs* is our pioneer paper to serve a want in the cause at the time of its establishment, to give character to the work on the Pacific Coast. But when I see so much made of this paper to the exclusion of the church paper, the *Review and Herald*, I have said they are beating on the wrong track. They do not work as intelligently as they suppose.--Letter 8, 1881, p. 8. (To Elders Butler and Haskell, June 20, 1881.) [Cf: 6MR116.01] p. 5, Para. 2, [1881MS].

We will spend next winter in California. I never want to risk another winter east.--Letter 3b, 1881, p. 3. (To Elder and Mrs. W. C. White, April 19, 1881.) [Cf: 6MR305.02] p. 5, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Father has excellent health. He has worked hard on the place here; put in more than one acre of strawberries, some raspberries, more than an acre of potatoes, several acres of corn, fifty hard maples, many peach trees, pear trees, and two long rows of pie plant.--Letter 4a, 1881, p. 4. (To Elder and Mrs. W. C. White, May 15, 1881.) [Cf: 6MR305.03] p. 5, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Tuesday morning it came to me distinctly, "Go to Iowa; I have a work for you to do." I should as soon have thought of going to Europe, but I told your father my convictions, that I should go with him or alone. He seemed surprised and said, "We will go."--Letter 5a, 1881, p. 4. (To Elder and Mrs. W. C. White, June 14, 1881.) [Cf: 6MR305.04] p. 5, Para. 5, [1881MS].

I was taken back to the Sanitarium. Sunday [the day after James White's funeral], I rode out to my home on a bed. Brother John, Willie, Mary, Edson and Emma and Brother John's son-in-law [came] in three different teams. Brother John and his son-in-law were greatly delighted with our home but I was too feeble to sit up at all and the light of my home had gone and henceforth I should love it for his sake who thought so much of it. It just met his taste. It is grandly beautiful but how can I ever regard it as I could if he had lived?--Letter 9, 1881, p. 4. (To "Dear Brother and Sister," October 20, 1881.) [Cf: 6MR305.05] p. 5, Para. 6, [1881MS].

Last Saturday night I fell heavily, after getting out of a sleigh. . . . Sunday I was taken to the office to attend two board meetings and carried up in a chair. [Cf: 7MR230.04] p. 5, Para. 7, [1881MS].

I have not been able to step on my right foot at all. I use crutches. Dr. Kellogg came Tuesday morning and told me I had a very bad ankle. The ligaments were torn loose from the ankle, which swung the heel

round out of place. He said I would not be able to use it at all for six weeks and perhaps not for two months. He fears it will always be weak in spite of everything they can do. He put it in splints but I was so nervous I could not keep them on through the night. Last night succeeded better. He did not bring the heel fully in place. Tonight he has brought it nearer in place. It is quite painful.--Letter 1a, 1881, p. 1. (To Willie and Mary White, January 6, 1881.) [Cf: 7MR230.05] p. 6, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Brother _____ could have done much better work for those that were to be ministers than he has done. God is not pleased that he has carried out his own plans, and led them after his own ideas. He has not always been patient, and encouraged men who have left their fields of labor at a sacrifice of time and expense to learn what they could in a short time. He has not adapted himself to the situation. He has mingled self in his work to a large extent. He might have done his part in sending forth these men with much greater knowledge, if he had not made grammar his idol, and kept the minds under his charge drilling upon grammar, when they should have been receiving a general education upon many subjects. [Cf: 8MR101.01] p. 6, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Brother _____ has not taken in the situation. Men come to mature years, even the meridian of life, having families of their own, and have become embarrassed unnecessarily. They have sometimes been placed in the most embarrassing positions. Brother _____ has been exceedingly sensitive himself, if his dignity was not respected, if he imagined that he was in thought or look or word ridiculed. He has not reasoned that there were minds just as sensitive as his own to sarcasm or ridicule and censure. In this he has wounded his brethren and displeased God. Brother _____ is naturally severe, critical, and exacting, and he will have to be guarded on this point constantly, with the elder as well as the younger. [Cf: 8MR101.02] p. 6, Para. 3, [1881MS].

He has kept drilling certain students upon grammar, making that the one all-important study, not giving them sufficient encouragement to have an equal opportunity for other studies and some have left the College with only half an education. He has wronged the students here. In this particular he has kept the minds confined to such a thoroughness as would not be essential in one case out of twenty. Time is short; the work to be accomplished is too great for any such definiteness. He carries this matter to great extremes and has injured his usefulness in so doing, and has created great dissatisfaction. These things must be corrected, for they are decidedly wrong.--Ms 2, 1881, pp. 1, 2. ("Our College," 1881.) [Cf: 8MR101.03] p. 6, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Confession Plays a Part.--Monday I attended five-o'clock meeting but found it a tract and missionary meeting, the same as I had found Sunday morning, and had to beat a retreat. The work of reformation, of seeking God, seemed to be dropped. I attended the nine -o'clock meeting. It was a social meeting. After several had spoken, I felt the burden of testimony, and I spoke with great plainness and power for about one hour, and the words were felt by the people. I called them forward and the center of the seats in the large tent were quickly filled. Then confessions were made one to another. The testimony I bore was in reference to their backslidings from God. Many tears were shed. The

Spirit of the Lord rested upon ministers and people. It was a good season. I labored hard but with pleasure and freedom.-- *Letter 5a*, 1881, p. 5. (To W. C. and Mary White, June 14, 1881.) [Cf: 9MR98.01] p. 6, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Ellen Dreams of James After His Death--A few days since I was pleading with the Lord for light in regard to my duty. In the night I dreamed I was in the carriage, driving, sitting at the right hand. Father was in the carriage, seated at my left hand. He was very pale, but calm and composed. "Why Father," I exclaimed, "I am so happy to have you by my side once more! I have felt that half of me was gone. Father, I saw you die; I saw you buried. Has the Lord pitied me and let you come back to me again, and we work together as we used to?" [Cf: 10MR38.02] p. 7, Para. 1, [1881MS].

He looked very sad. He said, "The Lord knows what is best for you and for me. My work was very dear to me. We have made a mistake. We have responded to urgent invitations of our brethren to attend important meetings. We had not the heart to refuse. These meetings have worn us both more than we were aware. Our good brethren were gratified, but they did not realize that in these meetings we took upon us greater burdens than at our age we could safely carry. They will never know the result of this long-continued strain upon us. God would have had them bear the burdens we have carried for years. Our nervous energies have been continuously taxed, and then our brethren misjudging our motives and not realizing our burdens have weakened the action of the heart. I have made mistakes, the greatest of which was in allowing my sympathies for the people of God to lead me to take work upon me which others should have borne. [Cf: 10MR38.03] p. 7, Para. 2, [1881MS].

"Now, Ellen, calls will be made as they have been, desiring you to attend important meetings, as has been the case in the past. But lay this matter before God and make no response to the most earnest invitations. Your life hangs as it were upon a thread. You must have quiet rest, freedom from all excitement and from all disagreeable cares. We might have done a great deal for years with our pens, on subjects the people need that we have had light upon and can present before them, which others do not have. Thus you can work when your strength returns, as it will, and you can do far more with your pen than with your voice." [Cf: 10MR39.01] p. 7, Para. 3, [1881MS].

He looked at me appealingly and said, "You will not neglect these cautions, will you, Ellen? Our people will never know under what infirmities we have labored to serve them because our lives were interwoven with the progress of the work, but God knows it all. I regret that I have felt so deeply and labored unreasonably in emergencies, regardless of the laws of life and health. The Lord did not require us to carry so heavy burdens and many of our brethren so few. We ought to have gone to the Pacific Coast before, and devoted our time and energies to writing. Will you do this now? Will you, as your strength returns, take your pen and write out these things we have so long anticipated, and make haste slowly? There is important matter which the people need. Make this your first business. You will have to speak some to the people, but shun the responsibilities which have borne us down." [Cf: 10MR39.02] p. 7, Para. 4, [1881MS].

"Well," said I, "James, you are always to stay with me now and we will

work together." Said he, "I stayed in Battle Creek too long. I ought to have gone to California more than one year ago. But I wanted to help the work and institutions at Battle Creek. I have made a mistake. Your heart is tender. You will be inclined to make the same mistakes I have made. Your life can be of use to the cause of God. Oh, those precious subjects the Lord would have had me bring before the people, precious jewels of light!" [Cf: 10MR39.03] p. 8, Para. 1, [1881MS].

I awoke. But this dream seemed so real. Now you can see and understand why I feel no duty to go to Battle Creek for the purpose of shouldering the responsibilities in General Conference. I have no duty to stand in General Conference. The Lord forbids me. That is enough.--Letter 17, 1881, pp. 2-4. (To W. C. White, September 12, 1881.) [Cf: 10MR40.01] p. 8, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Professor Bell has been cautioned again and again in regard to making the Sabbath School work like a machine, but he has not heeded the testimony. He is getting matters so fine, he will have a big reaction by and by. I know whereof I speak. You, working, burden-bearing men, must become [as] level and evenly-balanced as possible. You need to cling more firmly to simplicity.--Letter 1, 1881, p. 4. (To S. N. Haskell, April 22, 1881.) [Cf: 12MR56.01] p. 8, Para. 3, [1881MS].

(Written April 19, 1881, from Newton, Michigan, to "Dear Children Willie and Mary.")--Mary, I have a favor to ask of you. Will you get a small box and put in it small pink roots and slips, a few choice rose cuttings, fuchsia, and geraniums; and send also at the same time, if thought best, some on or two or more of my scrapbooks that contain pieces especially treating on the mother's duty and influence in her family. I would like that little blue-covered book for youth and any other books that would help me in the work we design to get out, *Mother's Influence*. We want these things as soon as they can reach us.--Letter 3b, 1881, p. 3. [Cf: 14MR282.01] p. 8, Para. 4, [1881MS].

(Read to General Conference delegates in Battle Creek, December, 1881.) We have many fears that our college is fast degenerating. It stands today in a position that God does not approve. I was shown that this would be the danger that would threaten it, and if the responsible men in the college should seek to reach the world's standard, or to mold it after the fashion of the colleges of our land, the woe of God would be upon it. [Cf: 20MR182.01] p. 8, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The time has come for me to speak decidedly. The purpose of God was plainly stated for the necessity of a college among us as a means where candidates for the ministry should be educated. The laborers in the gospel field are so few that years of labor could not be given to a thorough education. But there should be men who could take in the situation and carry forward this class of students rapidly, giving them knowledge upon the very subjects they most need for this work. I have been shown that this work has not been done. Brother Bell could have done much better work for those that were to be ministers than he has done. God is not pleased that he has carried out his own plans, and led them after his own ideas. [Cf: 20MR182.02] p. 8, Para. 6, [1881MS].

He has not adapted himself to the situation. He has not always been patient, and encouraged men who have left their fields of labor at a sacrifice of time and expense to learn what they could in a short time.

He has mingled self in his work to a large extent. He might have done his part in sending forth these men with much greater knowledge if he had not made grammar his idol, and kept the minds under his charge drilling upon grammar when they should have been receiving a general education upon many subjects. [Cf: 20MR182.03] p. 9, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Brother Bell has not taken in the situation. Men [who have] come to mature years--even the meridian of life--having families of their own, have become embarrassed unnecessarily. They have sometimes been placed in the most embarrassing positions. Brother Bell has been exceedingly sensitive himself if his dignity was not respected, if he imagined that he was in thought or look or word ridiculed. He has not reasoned that there were minds just as sensitive as his own to sarcasm or ridicule and censure. In this he has wounded his brethren and displeased God. [Cf: 20MR182.04] p. 9, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Brother Bell is naturally severe, critical, and exacting, and he will have to be guarded on this point constantly, with the elder as well as the younger. He has kept drilling certain students upon grammar, making that the one all-important matter, not giving them sufficient encouragement to have an equal opportunity for other studies; and some have left the college with only half an education. He has wronged the students here. In this particular he has kept the minds confined to such a thoroughness as would not be essential in one case out of twenty. Time is short; the work to be accomplished is too great for any such definiteness. He carries this matter to great extremes, and has injured his usefulness in so doing, and has created great dissatisfaction. These things must be corrected, for they are decidedly wrong. [Cf: 20MR182.05] p. 9, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The very same error has existed in regard to tract and missionary work. The time and means that have been used to educate so definitely have been an injury to the success of the work and the cause of God. While the tract and missionary work was a good work, and there needed to be a right way of working set before the people, time, study, and taxing effort have been given to this one branch to the neglect of other branches of the work fully as important. This matter has been carried to extremes. There has been too much mechanical working, too much machinery, and too little vital godliness combined with human effort; too much of man's judgment and device and too little room left for the divine. [Cf: 20MR183.01] p. 9, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The Sabbath school at Battle Creek is like a well regulated machine, like a clock which strikes at regular periods the hour of the day, and the real heart and soul is not there as it should be to prove a success. More of God's and less of man's work would be an improvement. The thought and time given to this mechanical working, if given to the spiritual and religious interest, would have altogether a better effect. More devotion, piety, and simplicity of godliness is essential. The same principle is needed in conducting of the college--more of the Spirit of the Lord and a dropping out of self. Diligence, perseverance, and zeal are needed, but exercised with the Spirit of Christ. [Cf: 20MR183.02] p. 9, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Brother Ramsey sees where Brother Bell fails, but he makes still more serious mistakes. He does not carry the burdens Brother Bell has

carried. He does not labor as Brother Bell has labored. He does not watch unto prayer. He fails again and again, being self-dignified, bringing himself to the front. He is overbearing, dictatorial, and self-important. He thinks more highly of himself than he ought. Nothing but the grace of God can give him correct views of his own self so that he will labor in humility and not disgust his pupils. He has made some improvements, but unless the Spirit of Christ is abiding in him, he will make, in his self-importance, serious blunders. He will not win the students, but repulse and disgust them. In a young man this spirit is very objectionable and highly displeasing to God. [Cf: 20MR183.03] p. 10, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Christ invites the self-important ones to learn of Him, for He is meek and lowly of heart. It is the meekness and lowliness of Christ that is so much needed in ministers and teachers. Self is petted and cherished, and Christ is not abiding in the heart. [Cf: 20MR184.01] p. 10, Para. 2, [1881MS].

There is work to be done for every teacher in our college, from those occupying the highest position to the lowest. Not one is divested of self, not one is free from selfishness, which is exhibited in many ways. If the piety and morals of the teachers were elevated as they should be, there would be a healthier influence among the students. There is not a performing of the work of every individual with an eye single to the glory of God. There is not a looking unto Jesus and studying His life and character, but a looking to self and meeting their own defective standard. [Cf: 20MR184.02] p. 10, Para. 3, [1881MS].

I wish I could impress upon all of you the responsibility that rests upon you in your influence over the young. Satan is as busy as he can be in his work to secure to himself the service of our dear youth. He lays his snares with great care that he may entangle in his net the inexperienced feet of the youth who do not discern his workings. [Cf: 20MR184.03] p. 10, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Those who are truly connected with God will not be at variance with one another. The spirit of harmony, peace, and love, His Spirit ruling in their hearts, will create harmony, love, and unity. The opposite of this works in the children of Satan; there is with them a continual contradiction. Strife, envy, and jealousy are the ruling elements. The characteristic of the Christian is the meekness of Christ. Benevolence, kindness, mercy, and love originate from Infinite Wisdom, while the opposite is the unholy fruit of a heart that is not in harmony with Jesus Christ. We ask in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, what fruit do you bear? [Cf: 20MR184.04] p. 10, Para. 5, [1881MS].

What a work is this, the education of children! In the common schools the religion of the Bible is not made a part of the education. One essential, and the most important element, is left out of the program. Education is a work which will tell through the ceaseless ages of eternity. The teachers should be men and women of experience who can impart light from the throne of God in all their instruction. Never should persons be placed in position as teachers who have not patience, kindness, and self-control. [Cf: 20MR184.05] p. 10, Para. 6, [1881MS].

There has been a fearful neglect of duty with the parents. Like Eli,

they have not restrained their children, and when the conduct of their children is such that it testifies against their management they think to obtain relief by sending them to college to be disciplined and to learn better manners than their parents have taught them at home. Here the teachers are left with a task on their hands which few can appreciate. If they succeed in reforming this crude and undisciplined class, parents take the credit, which is not due them, and do not give the teachers the credit they deserve. If the children choose the society of the evil-inclined, and go from bad to worse, then the teachers are censured and the school is denounced as being what it should not be, when the condemnation justly belongs upon the parents. They have the first and best years of the lives of their children while they were teachable and impressible. But the wicked, slothful parents failed in doing their work, and their children became confirmed in an evil course. They were hardened like flint when sent to the college. [Cf: 20MR184.06] p. 11, Para. 1, [1881MS].

If the parents had studied more of Christ and less of the world, if they had cared less to imitate the customs and fashions of the present age, and devoted time and painstaking effort to mold the minds and characters of their children after the divine Model, then they could send them forth with moral integrity to be carried forward in the branches of education to qualify them for any position of trust. [Cf: 20MR185.01] p. 11, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The teachers, if God-fearing and God-loving, could take these children a step nearer heaven, trained to make their capacities a blessing and not a curse. Connected with God, these instructors will exert an influence affecting the destiny of souls in leading them to the study and obedience of the law of God, carrying their minds up to the contemplation of eternal interests, opening before them a broad, expansive field of thought, presenting before them difficult Bible problems to master, strengthening the intellect to grasp grand and ennobling themes; and yet, there is an infinity beyond. [Cf: 20MR185.02] p. 11, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The greatest work is before us. Our peril, which threatens our usefulness and which will prove our ruin if not seen and overcome, is selfishness--placing a higher estimate upon our plans and our opinions and our labors, and moving independently of our brethren. "Counsel together," have been the words repeated by the angels again and again. Satan may move through one man's mind to warp things out of their proper channel; he may succeed with two who view things in a similar light; but with several minds enlisted there is greater safety. Every plan will be more liable to be criticized and viewed from all sides. Every advance will be more carefully studied, so that no enterprise will be entered into which will bring confusion and perplexity and defeat to the work in which we are engaged. In union there is strength; in division there is weakness and defeat. [Cf: 20MR185.03] p. 11, Para. 4, [1881MS].

God is leading out a people, fitting them for translation. Are we who are acting a part in this work standing as sentinels for God? Are we uniting our forces? Are we willing to become servants of all? Are we imitating the great Pattern? Fellow laborers, we are sowing the seed which we will reap unto eternal life. The harvest is ours, to reap that which we have sown. If you sow distrust, envy, jealousy, self-love,

bitterness of thought and feelings, this harvest you will be sure to reap. This will be a sowing of dragon's teeth to reap the same. If you manifest kindness, love, and tender thoughtfulness to your students, you will reap the same in return. If teachers are severe, critical, overbearing, not careful of others' feelings, they will receive the same in return. A man who wishes to preserve his self-respect and dignity must be careful not to sacrifice the respect and dignity of others. [Cf: 20MR186.01] p. 11, Para. 5, [1881MS].

This rule should be sacredly observed toward the dullest, the youngest, and the most blundering scholars. What God will do with these apparently uninteresting youth, you do not know. God has accepted and chosen in the past just such specimens to do a great work for Him. His Spirit acting upon the heart has operated like an electric battery, arousing the apparently benumbed faculties to vigorous and persevering action. The Lord saw in these rough, uninteresting, unhewn stones precious metal that will endure the test of storm and tempest and the fiery ordeal of heat. God seeth not as man seeth; God judgeth not as man judgeth. He searcheth the heart. He judgeth not from appearance, but judgeth righteously. [Cf: 20MR186.02] p. 12, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Every teacher and every professor in our conference work should preserve the characteristics of the Christian gentleman when associating with his students. He should show himself a friend, a counselor. He should be tender, noble, benevolent, and truly courteous. When all our ministers cultivate the spirit of Christian gentlemen, they will find access to hearts; ears will be open to hear, and souls [will] be softened to receive the light beams of truth. [Cf: 20MR186.03] p. 12, Para. 2, [1881MS].

When our teachers shall think less of great *I*, and be more deeply interested in the prosperity and success of their pupils, having a sense that they are God's property--that they must render an account to Him for every impression made upon the mind and for the mold given to the character--we shall have a school that will attract angels. Jesus will look lovingly upon the work of the teachers, and will send His grace into the hearts of the students. [Cf: 20MR186.04] p. 12, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The college in Battle Creek is a place where young men and young women should be trained upon God's plan of development and God's plan of development and growth, where the younger members of the Lord's family shall be impressed that they are created in the image of their Maker, and that their spirit must represent the spirit of Christ. [Cf: 20MR186.05] p. 12, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The minds of our brethren and sisters take too narrow and low a range. They do not keep before the mind's eye the divine plan, but are fixing their eyes upon worldly models. God calls you to look up, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, and then work to prepare the minds and characters of your students according to Christ's character. If you lower the standard to obtain numbers, and make this a cause of rejoicing, you show great blindness. You should never consider that numbers are an evidence of success, for then Satan indeed is in the ascendancy. He can boast of very large numbers. [Cf: 20MR187.01] p. 12, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Increasing numbers in your college is no evidence that your labors are being crowned with success. The Lord scorns all exhibition of pride and display. It is the strength of moral power increasing and pervading the college that testifies of its prosperity. It is the character, the virtue, and intelligence of the people composing our churches and colleges, not their numbers, that is a source of joy and should awaken thankfulness in the heart of every Christian. The Spirit of Christ in righteousness prevailing and pervading our church and college, publishing house and sanitarium, should be the cause of rejoicing, rather than their numbers. [Cf: 20MR187.02] p. 13, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Without the uplifting power of Christ, the refining influence of His grace, education will give no advantage to men. Without the Christian element and the sanctifying power of Christ in education, the learned become proud, vain, and bigoted in the domestic circle and in the church.--Ms 2, 1881. [Cf: 20MR187.03] p. 13, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Moses' work for Israel was almost done; yet one more act remained for the aged leader to perform, ere he should go to his long rest. "Avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites," was the divine command; "afterward thou shalt be gathered unto thy people." This mandate was communicated to Israel, not as the word of Moses, but of Christ, their invisible leader; and it was immediately obeyed. One thousand men were selected from each of the tribes of Israel, and sent out against the Midianites. In the battles which followed, that people were defeated, with great slaughter. [Cf: ST 01-06-81 para. 01] p. 13, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The men who promptly and speedily executed the divine judgments upon those heathen nations have been pronounced harsh and unmerciful in destroying so many human lives. But all who reason thus, fail to understand the character and dealings of God. In his infinite mercy, the Lord had long spared those idolatrous nations, giving them evidence upon evidence that he, the mighty Jehovah, was the God whom they should serve. He had commanded Moses not to make war upon Moab or Midian, for their cup of iniquity was not yet full. Additional evidence was to be given; clear and distinct light from the throne of God itself was to shine upon them. [Cf: ST 01-06-81 para. 02] p. 13, Para. 4, [1881MS].

When the king of Moab had called Balaam to pronounce a curse upon Israel, and thus accomplish their destruction, the goodness and mercy of God was strikingly displayed. That corrupt and hypocritical gain-seeker, whose heart longed to curse God's people for reward, was constrained to pronounce upon them the richest and most sublime blessings. The Moabites themselves could see that it was the power of God which controlled the avaricious prophet, and compelled him in the most exalted strains of inspiration to proclaim Israel God's chosen, and his almighty power her protection. Here the last ray of light shone upon a stiff-necked people who had set their wills in defiance to the will of God. When, at the suggestion of Balaam, the snare was laid for Israel, which resulted in the destruction of many thousands, then it was that the Midianites filled up the measure of their iniquities. Then their day of probation ended, the door of mercy was to them closed, and the mandate went forth from Him who can create and can destroy, "Vex the Midianites, and smite them; for they vex you with their wiles." [Cf: ST 01-06-81 para. 03] p. 13, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Those who would complain of God, or question the wisdom and justice of his dealings with his creatures should realize their own incompetence, with their finite wisdom, to determine what conduct is befitting to the judge of all the earth. They should make it their chief anxiety to so conduct themselves as not to become subjects of his wrath, and should leave the Lord to deal with the work of his hands according to his own wise purposes. [Cf: ST 01-06-81 para. 04] p. 14, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Moses had been filled with grief and indignation at the deceitful wiles by which Israel had been enticed to sin and thus bring upon themselves the wrath of God. In the command to make war upon the Midianites, Moses saw not only the justice of God in visiting his judgments upon the guilty, but his mercy in giving Israel the victory over a people who were seeking by every hellish art to accomplish their destruction. The Israelites were to engage in this warfare, not to gratify malice or revenge, but as God's instruments, to do his bidding, being influenced solely by zeal for the divine glory. [Cf: ST 01-06-81 para. 05] p. 14, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Men do not understand what they are doing, when they permit themselves even for a moment, to doubt the wisdom and benevolence of God,--to regard as a species of cruelty the judgments visited upon the stubborn and rebellious. Few realize the malignity of sin. It is a deadly leprosy, contaminating all who are brought in contact with it. If men persist in showing contempt for divine authority, God, who created them, and whose property they are, has a perfect right to take from them the blessings which they have abused. God's name and authority as ruler in the universe must be maintained. When idolatry is rearing its proud head, when blasphemy and rebellion are strengthening, then God reproves the sins of the nations, and the manifestations of divine anger which they had provoked come upon the transgressors of his law. The Most High delivers his word of doom, and chooses the instruments to perform his will. These messengers of God are required to faithfully perform the work appointed them, however repugnant it may be to their natural feelings. Sacred history records no instance in which these men were reprov'd for too great thoroughness and severity; but God has many times reprov'd his servants for lack of faithfulness in executing his judgments. In all this, God would teach us the lesson that in the future Judgment retribution will surely be visited upon "every soul of man that doeth evil," "according to the deeds done in the body." [Cf: ST 01-06-81 para. 06] p. 14, Para. 3, [1881MS].

God's method of dealing with sin is not in harmony with the views cherished by a large class who occupy a prominent position among the professed followers of Christ. Many of these men cherish sin, and laud the benevolence and longsuffering of God, and dwell upon the loving character of Jesus,--all mercy, all tenderness,--while they pass over the threatenings of God's wrath against sin and sinners, and our Saviour's scathing denunciations of hypocrisy and self-deception. It is those who have not a keen sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin that are ready to question the justice of God in punishing with such severity the sins of the Amalekites, Canaanites, and Midianites. Those who love sin are unable to comprehend God's dealings with his subjects. [Cf: ST 01-06-81 para. 07] p. 14, Para. 4, [1881MS].

In our day, as in ancient times, there is disagreeable work to be done in reprov'ing sin. In this work, God uses men as his instruments,--men

of determined purpose, whom no threat or peril can intimidate, no hardship turn aside from the path of duty,--men who will never forget their sacred commission as servants of the Most High. The Lord calls for men to act promptly, with the courage of heroes, and the firmness and faith of martyrs, to tear down the idolatrous images that have usurped his place in the minds of men, and meet the armed force of wrong on battlefields. But in all this there is no excuse for any to indulge in harshness or severity to gratify their own wrong feelings. [Cf: ST 01-06-81 para. 08] p. 15, Para. 1, [1881MS].

God wants men whom he can use to his own glory, either to bear reproof and execute justice, or, with a heart full of piety and benevolence, to carry light into darkened homes, to speak peace to the troubled soul, and point the sinner to the pardoning love of Christ. The great want of this age is men fitted to do God's will,--men who will listen with praying hearts for God's words, and will hasten to obey his voice. [Cf: ST 01-06-81 para. 09] p. 15, Para. 2, [1881MS].

There are men full of zeal, who claim to be doing God's will, while in reality they are governed by human impulse. They feel at liberty to question, criticise, and challenge every one who does not act in harmony with their ideas. They make themselves offensive to God and to the people. They wound continually, and by their wrong course create in others a spirit of distrust and hatred for God, because he employs such men to do his work. But the Lord does not give these men the great work which they consider theirs. If he did, he would give them grace to perform it after Heaven's order, not their own. Those who are permitted to become co-workers with God, should ever cultivate the feeling that in every plan and work, they are doing the will of the Most High; and that in any and every emergency, God's Spirit, not man's is to bear sway. [Cf: ST 01-06-81 para. 10] p. 15, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Balaam, having yielded himself to the control of covetousness, and hardened his heart by persistent rebellion, had joined his fortunes with the Midianites, and he perished in the general slaughter. He had felt a presentiment that his own end was near when he exclaimed, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." The fate of Balaam is similar to that of Judas, and their characters bear a marked resemblance to each other. Both had received great light and enjoyed special privileges; but a single cherished sin, like gangrene, poisoned the entire character, and drove them to perdition. [Cf: ST 01-06-81 para. 11] p. 15, Para. 4, [1881MS].

While the victorious Israelites completely destroyed the armies of Midian, they spared all the women and children, and brought them into the camp as captives. When Moses ascertained this, he became alarmed and indignant, and thus reproved the officers of the host: "Behold they caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the Lord in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord." There had been a lack of thoroughness in executing the commands of God. The war against Midian had been a just retribution upon a guilty people, of whom the women had been the principal criminals. Had these idolatrous, licentious women been preserved as captives, their presence would have constantly endangered the morals of Israel. The sympathy which would spare these transgressors was contrary to the will of God. [Cf: ST 01-06-81 para. 12] p. 15, Para. 5, [1881MS].

There is a sympathy for sin and sinners that is dangerous to the prosperity of the church at the present day. You must have charity is the cry. But that sentiment that would excuse wrong and shield the guilty, is not the charity of the Bible. The friendship of the wicked is more dangerous than their enmity; for none can prevail against the servants of the living God, except by tempting them to disobedience. [Cf: ST 01-06-81 para. 13] p. 16, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The offensive character of sin can be estimated only in the light of the cross. When men urge that God is too merciful to punish the transgressors of his law, let them look to Calvary; let them realize that it was because Christ took upon himself the guilt of the disobedient, and suffered in the sinners stead, that the sword of justice was awakened against the Son of God. It was to save us from shame and everlasting contempt that he endured the scorn and mockery which the world heaped upon him. It was our sins that caused the Saviour of the world such intense agony, pouring darkness into his soul, and extorting from his pale lips the anguished cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" [Cf: ST 01-06-81 para. 14] p. 16, Para. 2, [1881MS].

He was numbered among the transgressors, he made his soul an offering for sin, that in his righteousness the believing, repenting sinner might stand justified before God. [Cf: ST 01-06-81 para. 15] p. 16, Para. 3, [1881MS].

After all this, if man refuses to respond to the great sacrifice which has been made to ennoble and to save him, if he obstinately chooses the path of sin, will the great Judge of all the earth excuse the willful transgression of his holy law? Surely, everything that is noble and generous in our natures must respond to such love as Jesus manifested in suffering for our sake. It was an unexampled humiliation for him to take upon himself the nature of fallen man, and sacrifice his life for a race of rebels; and the manner of his death makes that humiliation more apparent. He "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." [Cf: ST 01-06-81 para. 16] p. 16, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Jesus was not insensible to ignominy. He felt the disgrace of sin as much more keenly than it is possible for man to feel it, as his divine and sinless nature was exalted above the nature of man. We should never entertain the thought that the Majesty of Heaven, so holy and undefiled, was not acutely sensitive to scorn and mockery, abuse and pain. He asks the murderous mob in Gethsemane, "Are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves?" This shameful treatment Jesus keenly felt, yet for our sakes he endured the most ignominious and most painful death which it was possible for mortals to experience; a death which was appropriate for the basest of criminals was that which the Lord of Glory suffered to ransom guilty man. Let none flatter themselves that they can continue in sin, and yet share in the great salvation which Christ has so dearly purchased. God is merciful and compassionate, but he is also just. Let the cross of Cavalry forever settle this matter. As surely as Christ, the guiltless, suffered for the guilty, so surely will the wrath of God fall upon the heads of those who persist in their transgression of his law. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 01-06-81 para. 17] p. 16, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The Lord announced to Moses that the appointed time to deliver Israel was at hand, and as the aged prophet stood upon the heights overlooking the river Jordan and the promised land, he gazed with deep interest upon the inheritance of his people. That vast, garden-like plain, with its deep verdure and feathery palm trees, spread out invitingly before him, and he felt an intense longing to share with Israel in the possession of that land which had been the object of their efforts, the goal of their hopes, for so many years. [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 01] p. 17, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Would it be possible that the sentence pronounced against him for his sin at Meribah,--the one defect that marred a life of faithful, devoted service,--might be revoked? With deep earnestness he pleaded, "O Lord God, thou hast begun to show thy servant thy greatness and thy mighty hand; for what God is there in Heaven or on earth that can do according to thy works and according to thy might! I pray thee, let me go over and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain and Lebanon." [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 02] p. 17, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The answer was, "Let it suffice thee; speak to me no more of this matter, lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward and behold it with thine eyes, for thou shalt not go over this Jordan." [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 03] p. 17, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Without a murmur or complaint, Moses humbly submitted to the decree of God; and now his great anxiety was for Israel. Who will feel the interest for their welfare that he has felt? Who will manifest the same untiring, unselfish, devotion? From a full heart, Moses pours forth the prayer, "Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep that have no shepherd." [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 04] p. 17, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Here were exhibited the same spirit of unselfishness, the same zeal for the honor of God, and the same interest in the welfare of the people of his care, that had characterized the life of Moses. The aged leader had not lived for himself, but for Israel. There is not to be found in the history of the great men of earth,--of kings, statesmen, or philosophers,--a parallel to this self-sacrifice and devotion. [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 05] p. 17, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The Lord hearkened to the prayer of his servant, and the answer came, "Take thee Joshua, the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay thine hand upon him; and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation, and give him a charge in their sight. And thou shalt put some of thine honor upon him, that all the congregation of Israel may be obedient." Joshua had long attended Moses, and being a man of wisdom and ability, of faith and piety, he was chosen to succeed him. Moses was to instruct Joshua concerning the responsibilities of his position as the visible leader of Israel, and to assure him that if he would be faithful to his sacred trust the Lord would ever be his counselor and support. [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 06] p. 17, Para. 6, [1881MS].

By the laying on of Moses' hands, and a most impressive charge, Joshua was solemnly set apart as the leader of Israel. He was also admitted to

a present share in the government as an evidence to the people that no jealousy stirred the heart of Moses at the thought that another was to take his place and lead Israel to the promised land. Moses instructed the people to respect Joshua, and inspired them with confidence in him as the man divinely appointed as his successor. The word of the Lord came through Moses to the congregation, "He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim, before the Lord. At his word shall they go out, and at his word shall they come in, both he and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation." [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 07] p. 18, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The position of Joshua differed in some respects from that of Moses. Not only was the latter a prophet and a ruler in Israel, but he officiated in the capacity of high priest, and asked counsel directly of God himself. But after Moses, neither Joshua nor any other of the rulers of Israel was permitted to come to the Lord except through the high priest. [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 08] p. 18, Para. 2, [1881MS].

At the command of God, Moses assembled the people, and proceeded to instruct them concerning the course which they should pursue upon their entrance into the promised land: "When ye are passed over Jordan into the land of Canaan, then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places. And ye shall dispossess the inhabitants of the land, and dwell therein; for I have given you the land to possess it." [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 09] p. 18, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The triumph of the wicked is short. The pleasures of sin are ever purchased at a tremendous cost; for the wrath of God is continually hanging over the sinner, and in the end, he will learn indeed that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Every corrupt passion, every wrong feeling, or sinful act, not only dishonors God, but brings guilt and misery upon ourselves. Only in the strength of God can we succeed in subduing the enemies of our souls. While the foes of Christ are continually at work as Satan's agents to entice us into sin, we must firmly resist their advances, looking to God for counsel and assistance. Every sinful desire must be repressed, every wrong trait overcome, or they will prove our ruin. [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 10] p. 18, Para. 4, [1881MS].

God requires his people to separate themselves from sin and sinners, choosing their society only when there is an opportunity to do them good. We cannot be too decided in shunning the company of all who have in any way exerted an influence to draw us into sin. None will be punished with greater severity than those who have enticed God's people from their integrity. [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 11] p. 18, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Every natural trait of character should be brought under the control of the will, and this must itself be kept in harmony with the will of God. It is one of the greatest deceptions that can come upon the mind to imagine ourselves more merciful or just than God. Man is impulsive and changeable. Even the best acts prompted by the natural heart are faulty. And how true is the testimony of the Sacred Record, that "the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel." Our only safe course is to

condemn what God condemns, and cherish what he cherishes. [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 12] p. 18, Para. 6, [1881MS].

Had the Lord spared the inhabitants of Canaan, the Israelites would have been in constant danger of contamination. The outward tokens of heathen worship would have had an influence to pervert the senses, and lead the servants of God into idolatry. Hence the repeated command addressed to them, to dispossess the Canaanites, by every means in their power, and as fast as they were able to subdue them. The Israelites were not to yield to cowardice, sloth, or self-indulgence, nor to set up their ideas of clemency in opposition to the command of God. They were not to conform to the customs of the heathen, nor to preserve the monuments of their abominable idolatries. However precious the material, or exquisite the workmanship, all that pertained to the heathen worship must be destroyed. [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 13] p. 19, Para. 1, [1881MS].

God knew the dangers to which his people would be exposed. Satan would work through those corrupt idolaters to destroy Israel, and temptation would address them with all the grace of manner and fascination of art. Few realize the power of Satan to ensnare and lead astray. Even in the days of Israel it had been for thousands of years his constant study to make the way to destruction easy and inviting. In this hellish work the great adversary employs numberless co-laborers to attract unwary feet away from God, away from Heaven. In view of all these allurements in the wrong direction, the Lord carefully instructed his people how to conduct themselves in order to resist temptation. [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 14] p. 19, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The apparent severity of God's dealings with the Canaanites did not, as many suppose, proceed from harshness or cruelty. The love of God is beyond our comprehension; it is high as the heavens, and broad as the universe. Every soul whom he has created is precious in his sight,--so precious that he gave his only begotten Son to die for that lost, perishing sinner. When men shall manifest toward their fellow-creatures a love superior to this, then they may talk of compassion where God has exercised severity. [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 15] p. 19, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The children of Israel had learned by their own bitter experience that the first step taken in departing from God makes the next step more easy, while the way to return becomes as difficult as are the ice-clad mountain steeps to the benumbed traveler. It seemed a small matter to our first parents to do only one little act which God had forbidden,--to take from the forbidden tree the fruit so attractive to the eye and pleasant to the taste; but by this one act they forfeited their allegiance to God, the great lawgiver, and opened the floodgates of misery to the world. God alone can measure the evils which may result from one wrong step,--evils which at the critical moment the tempted soul does not consider. The only safeguard for frail, erring man is to obey, without hesitation or argument, the expressed will of God, regardless of all promise of pleasure or profit as the reward of sin. When God speaks, it is enough. [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 16] p. 19, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The Lord mercifully set before his people the terrible results that would follow association with the idolatrous Canaanites: "But if ye

will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall come to pass that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell. Moreover, it shall come to pass that I shall do unto you as I thought to do unto them." By mingling with the heathen, Israel would become estranged from God, and would finally pursue the same course which had provoked his wrath against the Canaanites. [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 17] p. 20, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The after-history of God's chosen people shows that these warnings were real prophecies, which have been most strikingly fulfilled. The Israelites yielded only a partial obedience to the command of God, and for many generations they were afflicted by a remnant of the idolatrous nation, who were spared as the prophets had foretold, as "pricks in their eyes, and as thorns in their side." [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 18] p. 20, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Additional warning and instruction on this point was afterward given to Israel by the Lord through his servant Joshua: "Take good heed, therefore, unto yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God. Else if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of those nations, even those that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them and they to you; know for a certainty that the Lord will no more drive out any of these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you." [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 19] p. 20, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Should they enter into any friendly relation with those nations standing under the curse of God, the Hebrews would be infatuated and beguiled by the arts of idolatrous women, and would be led to form marriages with them. All the influence of these heathen women would be exerted to lead God's people into idolatry, and thus the devices of Satan would prove successful. The Lord would have his people regard the Canaanites as enemies to Israel and to God,--enemies who would be constantly on the watch for some occasion to avenge their own defeat. On condition that Israel be true to God, his power would be manifested in their behalf, and the gracious promise was, "One man of you shall chase a thousand, for the Lord your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you." But if they provoked the Lord by separating from him, he would withdraw his protection, and make these nations instruments to chastise and bring them back to their allegiance. Should they still continue to withdraw from God, he would not restrain the cruelties of these wicked nations, and they would grievously torment Israel, and at length drive them from their possessions. [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 20] p. 20, Para. 4, [1881MS].

When God's people should be placed in a condition of outward security and ease, and surrounded with every earthly blessing, they would be in the greatest danger of forgetting their constant Benefactor. This is the special danger of all whom God has blessed with means or with influence. All our powers should ever be diligently employed in the service of our Maker; yet how many allow themselves to be diverted from this object by worldly associations. The Lord has repeatedly warned his people not to mingle with those who have not the fear of God before them. While we pray, "Lead us not into temptation," we are to shun

temptation as far as possible. We must obey the divine word on every point, if we would have the strength of Israel's God as our support and our defense. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 01-13-81 para. 21] p. 20, Para. 5, [1881MS].

At the command of God, Moses fixed the future boundaries of the land of Canaan. He then proceeded to select a prince from each tribe, and committed to them the work of dividing the land by lot among the different tribes when they should come in possession. In this arrangement the tribe of Levi alone was exempted. They were considered as especially set apart to the service of God, and hence were given no inheritance among their brethren. Instead of this, forty-eight cities in different parts of the country were to be assigned them, as a permanent dwellingplace. [Cf: ST 01-20-81 para. 01] p. 21, Para. 1, [1881MS].

And now the Lord proceeded to give his people another evidence of his care and tender compassion for the unfortunate and the erring. To provide for the effectual punishment of murder, it was customary in ancient times for the execution of the murderer to devolve upon the nearest relative or the next heir of the deceased; and in extreme cases the avenger might pursue the criminal anywhere, and execute vengeance upon him without the formality of a trial. While the Lord would have the crime of murder regarded with great abhorrence, he would carefully guard the innocent. Hence, without entirely destroying the custom of private vengeance, he makes the most thorough provision that the guiltless be not rashly slain without trial, nor the guilty escape punishment. [Cf: ST 01-20-81 para. 02] p. 21, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Of the cities assigned to the Levites, six were appointed as cities of refuge, to which the manslayer might flee for safety. This provision was not designed for the willful murderer; but "that the slayer may flee thither, which killeth any person unawares." "And they shall be unto you cities of refuge, that the manslayer die not until he stand before the congregation in judgment." Special directions were given to determine whether the man was guilty of willful murder, or had taken life by accident. [Cf: ST 01-20-81 para. 03] p. 21, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The cities so wisely provided were to be located within a half-day's journey of every part of the land. It would not often happen that the avenger of blood would be in the spot, hence the unfortunate manslayer would have an opportunity to flee, and but few would be overtaken before they gained the place of safety. [Cf: ST 01-20-81 para. 04] p. 21, Para. 4, [1881MS].

But if the fugitive would escape with his life, there must be no delay; family and employment must be left behind, there was no time to say farewell to loved ones. His life is at stake, and every other interest must be sacrificed to the one purpose,--to reach the city of refuge. Weariness is forgotten, difficulties are unheeded. He does not for one moment slacken his pace until he is safe within the walls of the city. [Cf: ST 01-20-81 para. 05] p. 21, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The roads to these cities were always to be kept in good repair; all along the way, signposts were to be erected bearing the word Refuge in plain, bold characters, that the fleeing one might not hesitate for a moment. Any person,--Hebrew, stranger, or sojourner,--might avail

himself of this provision. The case of the fugitive was to be fairly tried by the proper authorities, and if found guiltless of intended murder he was to be protected in the city of refuge. Should he carelessly wander away beyond the prescribed limits, and the avenger of blood find him, his life would pay the penalty of his disregard for the Lord's provision. Those who remained within the city until the death of the high priest were then at liberty to return to their possessions. [Cf: ST 01-20-81 para. 06] p. 22, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Among the specific directions for the trial of persons suspected of murder were the following: "Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses; but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die." How wise and just is this injunction. If the charge was supported by only one witness, the accused person was not to be condemned, although circumstantial evidence might be strong against him. On the other hand, if proved guilty no atonement or ransom could rescue him. However distinguished his position might be, he must suffer the penalty of his crime. The safety and purity of the nation demanded that the sin of murder be severely punished. Human life, which God alone could give, must be sacredly guarded. [Cf: ST 01-20-81 para. 07] p. 22, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The blood of the victim, like the blood of Abel, will cry to God for vengeance on the murderer and on all who shield him from the punishment of his crime. Whosoever,--be it individual or city,--will excuse the crime of the murderer, when convinced of his guilt, is a partaker of his sin, and will surely suffer the wrath of God. The Lord designed to impress upon his people the terrible guilt of murder, while he would make the most thorough and merciful provision for the acquittal of the innocent. [Cf: ST 01-20-81 para. 08] p. 22, Para. 3, [1881MS].

God understands the perversity of the human heart. Personal enmity, or the prospect of personal advantage, has ruined the reputation and usefulness of thousands of innocent men, and in many cases has resulted in their condemnation and death. The worthless lives of violent and wicked men have been preserved by a bribe, while those who were guilty of no crime against the laws of the nation have been made to suffer. By their wealth or power, men of rank corrupt the judges and bring false witness against the innocent. The provision that none should be condemned on the testimony of one witness, was both just and necessary. One man might be controlled by prejudice, selfishness, or malice. But it was not likely that two or more persons would be so perverted as to unite in bearing false witness; and even should they do so, a separate examination would lead to a discovery of the truth. [Cf: ST 01-20-81 para. 09] p. 22, Para. 4, [1881MS].

This merciful provision contains a lesson for the people of God until the close of time. It was Christ who gave to Moses those explicit directions for the Hebrew host; and when personally with his disciples on earth, the great Leader repeated the same lesson as he taught them, how to treat the erring. One man's testimony was not to acquit or to condemn. One man's views and opinions were not to settle disputed questions. In all these matters, two or more were to be associated, and together they were to bear the responsibility in the case. God has made it the duty of his servants to be subject one to another. No one man's judgment is to control in any important matter. Mutual consideration and respect imparts proper dignity to the ministry, and unites the

servants of God in close bonds of love and harmony. While they should depend upon God for strength and wisdom, ministers of the gospel should confer together in all matters requiring deliberation. "That by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." [Cf: ST 01-20-81 para. 10] p. 22, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The laws instituted by God for the prevention and punishment of crime were marked by strict and impartial justice. But the sinfulness of man perverts the wisest laws, both human and divine. It is because men in authority can be bribed to excuse sin, and let the guilty pass unpunished that justice has fallen in the streets, and equity cannot enter. These evils are causing the earth to become as corrupt as in the days of Noah. The most terrible crimes are becoming so common as hardly to awaken a feeling of horror. Our own nation is guilty before God of permitting the most atrocious crimes to pass unheeded. The accumulating weight of unpunished sin is sinking the nation to destruction. The wrongs they do not condemn and punish are making this people the subjects of God's retributive justice. Licentiousness, robbery, and murder, continually on the increase, are deluging our world, and preparing it to receive the unmingled wrath of God. [Cf: ST 01-20-81 para. 11] p. 23, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The injunctions of God to the Hebrews should cause us to be filled with horror at the thought of even unintentionally destroying a human life. But when man is put to death by his fellow-man, to serve some selfish purpose,--as Naboth was slain that Ahab might obtain the coveted vineyard,--what honor [horror], what anguish, should be felt by those who make and execute the laws! How zealous should be their efforts to ascertain the facts, and then decide the case with strict integrity, and execute the penalty with impartial justice. [Cf: ST 01-20-81 para. 12] p. 23, Para. 2, [1881MS].

It was the opposite course pursued by the antediluvian world that made the growth of wickedness so rapid, and violence and crime so widespread, that God cleansed the earth from its moral pollution by a flood. It was the fact that licentiousness and murder were lightly regarded that fitted Sodom for God's judgments. Had those in authority taken upon themselves the work which the Lord had appointed them,-- fathers commencing in their own families to correct wrong, and magistrates and rulers acting with promptness and decision to punish the guilty,--others would have feared, and crime would have decreased. God would not then have deemed it necessary to take the matter in hand himself, and by terrible things in righteousness, execute the justice which had been perverted by men in authority. [Cf: ST 01-20-81 para. 13] p. 23, Para. 3, [1881MS].

To increase the horrors of murder, and aid in the detection of the criminal, the Lord ordained that when the body of a murdered person was found in the land, the most solemn and public ceremony should be held, under the direction of the magistrates and elders in connection with the priests of God's appointment. "If one be found slain in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it, lying in the field, and it be not known who hath slain him; then thy elders and thy judges shall come forth, and they shall measure unto the cities which are round about him that is slain; and it shall be, that the city which is next unto the slain man, even the elders of that city shall take a heifer, which hath not been wrought with, and which hath not drawn in

the yoke; and the elders of that city shall bring down the heifer unto a rough valley, which is neither eared nor sown, and shall strike off the heifer's neck there in the valley. And the priests, the sons of Levi shall come near; for them the Lord thy God hath chosen to minister unto him, and to bless in the name of the Lord: and by their word shall every controversy and every stroke be tried. And all the elders of that city, that are next unto the slain man, shall wash their hands over the heifer that is beheaded in the valley; and they shall answer and say, Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it. Be merciful, O Lord, unto thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and lay not innocent blood unto thy people of Israel's charge. And the blood shall be forgiven them. So shalt thou put away the guilt of innocent blood from among you, when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the Lord. [Cf: ST 01-20-81 para. 14] p. 23, Para. 4, [1881MS].

After the most diligent search had failed to discover the murderer, the rulers were by this solemn ceremony to show their abhorrence of the crime. They were not to regard with carelessness and negligence the deeds of the guilty. In all their acts they were to show that sin has a contaminating influence,--that it leaves a stain upon every land and every person who will not by all possible means seek to bring the wrongdoer to justice. God regards as his enemies those who will by any act of negligence shield the guilty. They are in his sight partakers in the evil deeds of the sinner. [Cf: ST 01-20-81 para. 15] p. 24, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Here are lessons which God's people at the present day should take to heart. There are grievous sins indulged by individual members of the church,--covetousness, over-reaching, deception, fraud, falsehood, and many others. If these sins are neglected by those who have been placed in authority in the church, the blessing of the Lord is withheld from his people, and the innocent suffer with the guilty. The officers in the church should be earnest, energetic men, having a zeal for God, and they should take the most prompt and thorough measures to condemn and correct these wrongs. In this work they should act, not from selfishness, jealousy, or personal prejudice, but in all meekness and lowliness of mind, with a sincere desire that God may be glorified. Inhumanity, false dealing, prevarication, licentiousness, and other sins, are not to be palliated or excused; for they will speedily demoralize the church. Sin may be called by false names, and glossed over by plausible excuses and pretended good motives, but this does not lessen its guilt in the sight of God. Wherever it may be found, sin is offensive to God, and will surely meet its punishment. [Cf: ST 01-20-81 para. 16] p. 24, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The cities of refuge appointed for God's ancient people are a symbol of the Refuge provided and revealed in Jesus Christ. The offering made by our Saviour was of sufficient value to make a full expiation for the sins of the whole world, and all who by repentance and faith flee to this Refuge, will find security; here they will find peace from the heaviest pressure of guilt, and relief from the deepest condemnation. By the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and his work of mediation in our behalf, we may become reconciled to God. The blood of Christ will prove efficacious to wash away the crimson stain of sin. [Cf: ST 01-20-81 para. 17] p. 24, Para. 3, [1881MS].

A merciful Saviour appointed the temporal cities of refuge, that the innocent might not suffer with the guilty. The same pitying Saviour has by the shedding of his own blood wrought out for the transgressors of God's law a sure Refuge, into which they may flee for safety from the pangs of the second death. And no power can take out of his hands the souls who flee to him for pardon. [Cf: ST 01-20-81 para. 18] p. 25, Para. 1, [1881MS].

As the manslayer was in constant peril until within the city of refuge, so is the transgressor of God's law exposed to divine wrath until he finds a hiding-place in Christ. As loitering and carelessness might rob the fugitive of his only chance for life, so delays and indifference may prove the ruin of the soul. Our adversary, the devil, is on the watch constantly to destroy the souls of men, and unless the sinner is sensible of his danger and earnestly seeks shelter in the eternal Refuge, he will fall a prey to the destroyer. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 01-20-81 para. 19] p. 25, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Moses obeyed the command of God to recapitulate the law in the hearing of all the people. He vividly portrayed the scenes of sacred grandeur which their fathers witnessed at the mount, when Israel was taken into covenant with the Lord as a peculiar treasure,--as a holy nation to be united with a holy God. [Cf: ST 03-03-81 para. 01] p. 25, Para. 3, [1881MS].

At the wonderful manifestations of divine power upon that solemn occasion,--the mysterious trumpet tones waxing louder and more terrible, the peals of thunder reverberating from every mountain side, the lightning's flash illuminating the stern and solemn heights, and on Sinai's summit, amid cloud, and tempest, and thick darkness, the glory of God as a devouring fire,--at these tokens of Jehovah's presence, the hearts of Israel failed with fear, and the whole congregation "stood afar off." Even Moses exclaimed, "I exceedingly fear and quake." Then above the warring elements was heard the voice of Jehovah, speaking the ten precepts of his law. [Cf: ST 03-03-81 para. 02] p. 25, Para. 4, [1881MS].

As God's great mirror revealed to the people of Israel their true condition, their souls were overwhelmed with terror. The awful power of God's utterances seemed more than their quaking frames could bear. They entreated Moses, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die." As God's great rule of right was presented before them, they realized, as never before, the offensive character of sin, and their own guilt, in the sight of a pure and holy God. [Cf: ST 03-03-81 para. 03] p. 25, Para. 5, [1881MS].

That law is the mirror into which we also are to look attentively to see ourselves as we appear in God's sight. It is Heaven's great standard of right, with which we are to compare our life and character. Because the law points out our sins and declares our guilt, we are not to trample it under our feet, or to turn from the picture where our character stands revealed. We are not to forget what manner of persons we are, and make no effort to remove the defects from our moral character. We must exercise repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. We must be doers of the word, and not hearers only. The heart, the seat of the affections, must be transformed, the moral nature renewed by grace. [Cf: ST 03-03-81 para. 04] p. 25, Para. 6,

[1881MS].

What a precious truth, that the only One who can give peace to the weary, sin-sick soul, is the originator of the very law the sinner has violated. All power in Heaven and on earth is given to Christ, and while his soul was made a sacrifice for sin, he will accept the humble penitent, and give him rest and peace. He knows the enormity of man's guilt and for this reason he came to earth to open a way whereby men may be released from the bondage of sin, and obtain power to obey the law of God. Thus may we become a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, to show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. [Cf: ST 03-03-81 para. 05] p. 26, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Moses endeavors to impress upon Israel the importance of obeying the law of God. He urges them to show their love for God by making those sacred principles the rule of their daily life. They must be willing to suffer any inconvenience, rather than break one of God's commandments. Such a course would be more pleasing to God than mere professions of loyalty, or words of praise. And obedience to God was their only safety as individuals, or as a nation; for this alone would secure the divine favor, and insure to them happiness and prosperity in the land to which they were going. [Cf: ST 03-03-81 para. 06] p. 26, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The very same Jesus, who, veiled in the cloudy pillar, led the Hebrew hosts, is our leader. He who gave wise and righteous and good laws to Israel, has spoken to us as verily as to them. Our prosperity and happiness depends upon our unwavering obedience to the law of God. Finite wisdom could not improve one precept of that holy law. Not one of those ten precepts can be broken without disloyalty to the God of Heaven. To keep every jot and tittle of the law is essential for our own happiness, and for the happiness of all connected with us. "Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." Yet finite man will present to the people this holy, just, and good law as a yoke of bondage,--a yoke which man cannot bear! It is the transgressor that can see no beauty in the law of God. [Cf: ST 03-03-81 para. 07] p. 26, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The whole world will be judged by this law. It reaches even to the intents and purposes of the heart, and demands purity in the most secret thoughts, desires, and dispositions. It requires us to love God supremely, and our neighbor as ourselves. Without the exercise of this love, the highest profession of faith is mere hypocrisy. God claims, from every soul of the human family, perfect obedience to his law. "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." [Cf: ST 03-03-81 para. 08] p. 26, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The least deviation from that law, by neglect, or willful transgression, is sin, and every sin exposes the sinner to the wrath of God. The unrenewed heart will hate the restrictions of the law of God, and will strive to throw off its holy claims. Our eternal welfare depends upon a proper understanding of the law of God, a deep conviction of its holy character, and a ready obedience to its requirements. Men must be convicted of sin before they will feel their need of Christ. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." Satan is continually at work to lessen man's estimate of the grievous character of sin. Those who trample under their feet the law of God, have

rejected the only means to define to the transgressor what sin is. They are doing the work of the great deceiver. [Cf: ST 03-03-81 para. 09] p. 26, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Whenever the people of Israel had met with difficulties in their journeyings, they had been ready to ascribe all their troubles to Moses. But now as he stands before them to bear his last testimony, their suspicions that he is controlled by pride, ambition, or selfishness, are removed. They listen with confidence to his words as he assures them that the reproofs, warnings, and encouragements, which he had given them, with the statutes and judgments, were not spoken by his own authority, but they were the words of the mighty God of Israel. "Behold I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. . . . For what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law which I set before you this day?" [Cf: ST 03-03-81 para. 10] p. 27, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Moses assures his people that no other nation has so wise, righteous, and merciful, rules of life as had been vouchsafed to the Hebrews. Obedience to these sacred precepts would preserve harmony between man and man, and between man and his Maker, and would cause Israel to be regarded by all surrounding nations as a wise and understanding people. In what contrast to the teachings of God's ancient servant are the words of many who profess to be Christ's ambassadors, while they teach the people to transgress God's holy law. In the day when every work will be brought into Judgment before God, the question will be asked of these false guides, "Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord?" In that day, these profane triflers with God's holy law, will be overwhelmed with terror and despair. [Cf: ST 03-03-81 para. 11] p. 27, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Moses related to the people the simple facts in their history as they had occurred. He faithfully set before them their own errors, and the transgressions of their fathers, and told them plainly that distrust and unbelief had been their great sin. He did not call up bitter memories, or indulge in censure and reproof, to gratify his own feelings. He presented these things to show that it was unsafe for them to rely upon their own wisdom. With the pitying tenderness which a godly father exercises toward an erring son, he sought to awaken in them true sorrow for their sins, and heartfelt repentance toward God. He impressed them with the fact that God was not in any way chargeable for their misfortunes. He had been faithful to his promises, but they had broken their solemn pledge to him; they had transgressed his holy requirements, and his wrath had been kindled against them again and again. [Cf: ST 03-03-81 para. 12] p. 27, Para. 3, [1881MS].

God was presented before them, not as a stern, relentless judge, but as a loving, compassionate father. They were assured that when they would truly repent, he would pardon their sins. Moses presented before the people the love of God as displayed in their past journeyings, in pardoning their transgressions, and still retaining them as his people. He reminded them that they had often felt dissatisfied, impatient, and

rebellious, toward God, because of their long wandering in the wilderness. But the Lord had not been chargeable with this delay in possessing Canaan. He was more grieved than they because he could not bring them into immediate possession of the promised land, and thus display before all nations his mighty power in the deliverance of his people. But they had not been prepared to enter Canaan. With their manifest distrust of God, with their pride and unbelief, they would in no way represent that people whose God is the Lord. They did not bear his character of purity, goodness, and benevolence. [Cf: ST 03-03-81 para. 13] p. 28, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Their fathers had forfeited his favor by their disobedience. Had they submitted to his authority, as a nation being governed by his judgments, and as individuals walking in his ordinances, they would long ago have been settled in Canaan, a prosperous, holy, happy people. Their delay to enter the goodly land dishonored God, and detracted from his glory in the sight of surrounding nations. [Cf: ST 03-03-81 para. 14] p. 28, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Their own perversity of spirit made it impossible for God to manifest his power in protecting them from the nations that opposed their passage to Canaan. When those who had been God's chosen people, who had witnessed so many displays of his greatness, and the majesty of his power, should imitate the iniquities of the heathen, the guilt of Israel would be as much greater than was that of the idolatrous nations, as were their privileges. Not one of the good things which God had promised to his people would fail if they would comply with the conditions upon which these blessings were bestowed. If God's angels wrought with the armies of Israel to drive out the inhabitants of Canaan because of their wickedness, the Hebrews must be free from the sins of those nations. They must maintain a high standard of purity and holiness, and must show in all their words and acts that they loved, feared, and obeyed, the great Ruler of the universe. [Cf: ST 03-03-81 para. 15] p. 28, Para. 3, [1881MS].

God could not sanction sin, nor protect iniquity. Justice and love are the ruling attributes of his character. While he will punish the transgressors of his law, that others may fear, he has ever tempered judgment with mercy. God singled out the Hebrew nation and connected them with himself, that he might make them representatives of his own character. He would make them a beacon of light to all surrounding nations, that his name might be glorified, and his service exalted. By communion with God, the Israelites were to become partakers of the divine nature, their hearts, debased by sin, were to be purified, their aspirations ennobled. They were to stand forth before the world as an example of what men may become through Jesus Christ. Those whom God would elevate and ennoble by connection with himself, would become, by transgression, wholly debased and Satanic in character. It was for them to choose the course which they would pursue. [Cf: ST 03-03-81 para. 16] p. 28, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The history of the children of Israel is written for our admonition. We are probationers as they were. We may connect with God as was their privilege. We may become strong in the strength of Israel's God. If we will believe and obey his word as did Caleb and Joshua. But if we are doubting, and unbelieving, and rebellious, as were the multitudes who fell in the wilderness, we shall be found unworthy to possess those

mansions which Christ has gone to prepare for us. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 03-03-81 para. 17] p. 29, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The time drew near when Moses was to leave to others the command of Israel. In obedience to God's decree, he must soon go up to Mount Nebo to die. But before he should leave the congregation, the Lord directed him to rehearse to them the main facts of their deliverance from Egypt and their journeyings in the wilderness. He was to present before them the wonderful manifestations of God's power in bringing them forth from the iron furnace, which figure well illustrated their cruel and degrading bondage in Egypt. They would never have been delivered from their oppressors but for the interposition of the God of Heaven. [Cf: ST 03-10-81 para. 01] p. 29, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Moses was not only to present before the people the merciful manifestations of divine power in all their journeyings, but to recapitulate the law of God spoken from Sinai. When the law was repeated by the mouth of Jehovah to their fathers, the present congregation of Israel were too young to comprehend the awful grandeur and solemnity of the occasion. Their fathers heard the voice of God, and witnessed his power, and were made to feel the sacred character of his holy law; but they had not kept that law, and for their transgressions, they fell in the wilderness without seeing the goodly land. The sins and mistakes which brought upon the fathers the wrath of God, were to be rehearsed before their children, that they might see the awful results of transgression of God's law. As they were soon to pass over Jordan and take possession of the promised land, God would present before them in a correct light the claims of his law, and enjoin upon them obedience as the only condition of their prosperity. It was not enough for them to be God's people in name only. Their love to him, their right to the name of the Israel of God, would be manifested by their obedience. [Cf: ST 03-10-81 para. 02] p. 29, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Moses stands before the people to repeat his last warnings and admonitions. His face is illuminated with a holy light. His hair is white with age; but his form is erect, his countenance expressing the unabated vigor of health, and his eye clear and undimmed. It was an important occasion. He was once more to give to the people the words of God. With deep feeling and poetic eloquence he magnified the Lord God of Israel. The great mercy, and the unfailing love of their Almighty Protector were portrayed in the most sublime and impressive language. He gave warnings, reproofs, cautions, and encouragement, as Christ had given him the words. [Cf: ST 03-10-81 para. 03] p. 29, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Moses dwelt with great earnestness upon the Lord's wonderful works in bringing his people from Egypt. He set before them the many blessings they had received, for which their hearts should have been filled with gratitude to God, instead of cherishing doubt and unbelief. He dwelt with peculiar earnestness upon the period when they were an unorganized, helpless mass of people, making their way in a disorderly march toward the Red Sea. The Lord favored them with his presence. The cloudy banner in the sky, the standard of their invisible Leader, was a sure guide, a canopy to protect them from fiery heat by day, and a pillar of fire, illuminating their encampment by night, constantly assuring them of the divine presence. And this angel of God, leading

their armies in all their journeyings, was their Redeemer. "When Israel, of the Lord beloved, Out from the land of bondage came, Their fathers' God before them moved, An awful guide in cloud and flame. "By day along the astonished land, The cloudy pillar glided slow; By night, Arabia's crimson sands--Returned the fiery column's glow." [Cf: ST 03-10-81 para. 04] p. 29, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Moses reminds them how, on the third day of their journey, the way grew strange and perplexing, and night found them walled in right and left by ranges of impassable mountains, while directly in front was the Red Sea. They were filled with apprehension, they knew not what course to pursue; yet they had followed the leading of the cloudy pillar. In weariness and hunger, they camped beside the sea, their hearts oppressed with dark forebodings. Then, to complete their despair, they saw and heard the Egyptian host in close pursuit. The armies of Israel were panic-stricken; to all appearance they were a sure prey to their bitterest enemies. But lo, they see the pillar of fire rise from the front, and pass grandly to the rear of the Hebrew host; as a massive wall between them and the Egyptians,--a bright light to the Hebrews, a cloud of thick and awful darkness to their enemies. [Cf: ST 03-10-81 para. 05] p. 30, Para. 1, [1881MS].

While the people reproached Moses as the cause of all their perplexities, the Lord bade him say to the terror-stricken multitude, "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you today." "The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." In obedience to the divine command, Go forward, the vast army move to the water's edge, then Moses lifts up the rod, and at its stroke the angry waves pile up on either side, revealing the path for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in. But no voice had spoken to the defiant king to go forward; and the path of God's providence, the path of safety for his people, was to the enemies of God the path of defeat and destruction. The waters closed over them, and Moses said to the Hebrew host, "The Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever. [Cf: ST 03-10-81 para. 06] p. 30, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The thrilling incidents of this night passage had been oft repeated to the Israelites; but never before had it been so vividly portrayed. All who had taken an active part on this occasion, with the exception of Moses and Aaron, Caleb and Joshua, had died in the wilderness. Those who were now responsible men, were children at the time of their passage through the Red Sea, and they had not correct and distinct ideas of this wonderful manifestation of God's power in their deliverance. This important event, rehearsed by Moses with earnestness and solemn eloquence, softened their hearts, and increased their love, their faith and reverence for God. [Cf: ST 03-10-81 para. 07] p. 30, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Moses repeated the song of thanksgiving which he had composed, and which thousands of the Hebrew host united in singing on the shores of the Red Sea, not only men, but women also lifting up the voice of praise, joining to pour forth their exultant, Heaven-inspired gratitude. This song is one of the most sublime and thrilling expressions of triumph and of praise to be found in all the annals of history. Moses recounts the wonderful deliverance which God has wrought for his people and extols his justice and faithfulness and love. [Cf:

ST 03-10-81 para. 08] p. 30, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The Lord frequently permits his people to be brought into strait places, that they may turn to him, their protector and deliverer, as a child would turn to his parents when in trouble and fear. It is no evidence that God is against us, because we are afflicted. When Christ was on earth, a man born blind was brought to him to be healed. The question was asked Jesus, "Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" The Saviour answered, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." This answers the troubled questioning of many minds, "Why should these things be? Is it because of our sins that distress and sorrow have come upon us?" It is true that pain and death are the consequence of sin. But the Lord permits those he loves to be brought into trial, that they may learn the precious lessons of trust and faith. If trials are received aright, they will prove of the highest value to us in our religious experience. As they lead us to put our trust more firmly in God, we become better acquainted with his character. [Cf: ST 03-10-81 para. 09] p. 31, Para. 1, [1881MS].

When the Lord has answered our prayers, and proved himself better to us than our fears, we should not fail to express our gratitude for his mercies. Like the Hebrew host, we should praise him for his wonderful works. Here many fail to glorify God. They do not tell of his goodness, making known to all around them that the Lord is to them a present help in every time of need. [Cf: ST 03-10-81 para. 10] p. 31, Para. 2, [1881MS].

We should praise God for every blessing we enjoy, and above all else should we express our gratitude for the provisions of his grace. What compassion, what matchless love, hath God shown to us, lost sinners, in connecting us with himself to be to him a peculiar treasure! What an infinite sacrifice has been made by our Redeemer, that we may be called children of God! and what a tribute of love and gratitude should it call forth! [Cf: ST 03-10-81 para. 11] p. 31, Para. 3, [1881MS].

If the heart be given to God in earnest, sincere affection, we shall love those for whom Christ died, and thus may we reflect back glory to God. By meditating upon his word and drawing nigh to him in the simplicity of faith we may behold his excellency and his glory, and thus be changed into the same image. We should offer unto God the sacrifice of praise continually, giving thanks unto his name. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 03-10-81 para. 12] p. 31, Para. 4, [1881MS].

In all the dealings of God with his people there is, mingled with his love and mercy, a striking exactness and firmness of decision. This is clearly exemplified in the history of the Hebrew people. God had bestowed great blessings upon Israel. His lovingkindness toward them is thus touchingly portrayed by his own hand: "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings, so the Lord alone did lead them." And yet what swift and severe retribution was visited upon them for their transgressions. How, then, can sinners in any age hope to escape the wrath of God? [Cf: ST 03-24-81 para. 01] p. 31, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Again, more wonderful than his mercy toward Israel is the love which Christ has manifested in his infinite sacrifice to redeem a lost race.

His earthly life was filled with deeds of divine tenderness and compassion. And yet Christ himself plainly declares, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled." While he tells us of the love of God, he also pictures the awful scenes of the Judgment and the retribution that shall be visited upon the wicked. In all the Bible, God is presented not only as a being of mercy and benevolence, but as a God of strict and impartial justice. [Cf: ST 03-24-81 para. 02] p. 32, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The great Ruler of nations had declared that Moses was not to lead the congregation of Israel into the goodly land, and all the earnest pleadings of God's servant could not secure a remission of his sentence. He knew that he must die. Yet he had not for a moment faltered in his interest and care for Israel. He had faithfully sought to prepare the congregation to enter upon the promised inheritance, and had repeated before them the law of God, and his wonderful dealings with them as a people. He would in every possible way guard them from transgression. [Cf: ST 03-24-81 para. 03] p. 32, Para. 2, [1881MS].

He now completed the work of writing all the laws, the statutes and judgments which God had given him, and all the regulations concerning the sacrificial system. The book containing these was placed in charge of the proper officers, and was for safekeeping deposited in the side of the ark. An erring people often interpret God's requirements to suit their own desires; therefore the book of the law was to be sacredly preserved for future reference. [Cf: ST 03-24-81 para. 04] p. 32, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Moses was filled with fear that the people would depart from God, their only helper. In a most sublime and thrilling address he set before them the blessing which would be theirs, if they lived in obedience to God, and then declared the terrible curses that would rest upon them, should they depart from him. "And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee. " And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other, and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest; but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind. And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see." [Cf: ST 03-24-81 para. 05] p. 32, Para. 4, [1881MS].

He closed with these solemn and impressive words: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live. That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him; for he is thy life, and the length of thy days. That thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them." [Cf: ST 03-24-81 para. 06] p. 32, Para. 5, [1881MS].

At the divine command, Moses and Joshua now repaired to the tabernacle, while the pillar of cloud came and stood over the door. Here the people were solemnly given into Joshua's charge. The leadership of the man who had so long and so faithfully cared for Israel was now ended. Still Moses forgets himself in his interest for his people. In the presence of the assembled multitudes the great leader in the name of God, addressed to his successor these words of holy cheer; "Be strong and of a good courage; for thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I sware unto them; and I will be with thee." He then turned to the elders and officers of the people giving them a solemn charge to faithfully obey the instructions he had communicated to them from God. [Cf: ST 03-24-81 para. 07] p. 33, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Together Moses and Joshua stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the eyes of all the congregation were fixed upon them. The aged man, now doubly dear, must soon be taken from them; and they recall with a new and deeper appreciation, his parental tenderness, his wise counsels, and his untiring labors. His successor was the man of God's choice, but he had far less experience. How could he bear alone the burdens which had rested so heavily even upon Moses? The people called to mind how often Moses had stood between them and God's vengeance for their sins. How often had his earnest pleadings turned aside the blow! They would gladly have kept him with them, but they knew that this was impossible. Their grief was heightened by remorse. They bitterly remembered that their own perverse course had provoked Moses to the sin for which he must die. [Cf: ST 03-24-81 para. 08] p. 33, Para. 2, [1881MS].

God designed to arouse the Israelites to see the sinfulness of their course. The removal of their beloved leader would be a far stronger rebuke than any which they could have received, had his life and mission been continued. Now the Lord would make them feel that they are not to make the life of their future leader as hard and trying as they have made that of Moses. God speaks to his people in blessings bestowed; and when these are not appreciated, he speaks to them in blessings removed, that they may be led to see their sins and return to him with all the heart. [Cf: ST 03-24-81 para. 09] p. 33, Para. 3, [1881MS].

That very day there came to Moses the command, "Get thee up unto Mount Nebo, . . . and behold the land of Canaan, which I gave unto the children of Israel for a possession. And die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people." Often had Moses left the camp of Israel, in obedience to the divine summons, to commune with God; but he was now to depart on a new and mysterious errand. He must go forth to resign his life into the hands of his Creator. Moses knew that he was to die alone; no earthy friend would be permitted to minister to him in his last hours. [Cf: ST 03-24-81 para. 10] p. 33, Para. 4, [1881MS].

He was not beyond temptation, and there was a mystery and awfulness about the scene before him, from which his heart shrank. He was in the full vigor of health, with all his powers in active exercise. Was some strange and fearful sickness to come upon him? Must his body lie unburied, a prey to the wild beasts and the fowls of the air? Was this to be the end of his life of toil and sacrifice? But the severest trial

was his separation from the people of his care and love,--the people with whom his interest and his life had been identified for forty years. His heart was filled with anxiety for their future, and oppressed with forebodings of evil, as he remembered their constant tendency to depart from God. Never had his faith been more severely tried. But he had learned to trust in God, and he calmly submitted to the decree of infinite love and wisdom. [Cf: ST 03-24-81 para. 11] p. 33, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Moses did not entertain the opinion now cherished by most of the Christian world, that as soon as a good man dies, he enters the mansions of eternal bliss, in a land of which Canaan with all its attractions, was but a dim type. Had he believed this, he would not have pleaded so earnestly for permission to cross the Jordan and share the inheritance of his people. [Cf: ST 03-24-81 para. 12] p. 34, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Again the Spirit of God rested upon his servant, and in the most sublime and touching language he pronounced a blessing upon the tribes individually. He then closed with a general benediction, in which he set forth God's care for Israel, and the exalted position which they might occupy, if they would live in obedience to his law. "The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms. And he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee, and shall say, Destroy them. Israel, then, shall dwell in safety alone. The fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel. Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! And thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 03-24-81 para. 13] p. 34, Para. 2, [1881MS].

When Moses had ended his last words to Israel, he turned from the congregation, and in silence and alone he made his way up the mountain side. He went to Pisgah, the loftiest ridge, and then to Nebo, the highest point on that ridge. Upon that lonely height he stood, and gazed with undimmed eyes upon the scene spread out on every side. Far away to the west lay the blue waters of the Great Sea; in the north, snowy Hermon stood out against the sky; to the east was the tableland of Moab, and beyond lay Bashan, the scene of Israel's triumph; and away to the south stretched the desert of their long wanderings. [Cf: ST 03-31-81 para. 01] p. 34, Para. 3, [1881MS].

In solitude, Moses reviewed his life of vicissitudes and hardships since he turned from courtly honors and from a prospective kingdom in Egypt, to cast in his lot with God's chosen people. He called to mind those long years in the desert with the flocks of Jethro, the appearance of the angel in the burning bush, and his own call to deliver Israel. He again beheld the mighty miracles of God's power in the plagues upon Egypt, the wonderful passage through the Red Sea, the symbol of God's presence in the cloud and the pillar of fire, the water bursting from the rock, the daily bread descending from heaven with the falling dew, the victories which the Lord had given them over their enemies, their quiet and secure repose in the midst of a vast wilderness, and the unsurpassed glory and majesty of the divine presence which had been revealed to him. As he reviewed these things, he was overwhelmed with a sense of the goodness and power of God. His

promises were sure to Israel. When they were faithful and obedient, no good thing promised had been withheld from them. [Cf: ST 03-31-81 para. 02] p. 34, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Moses had been disappointed and grieved by the continual rebellion of Israel. Notwithstanding all his prayers and labors during their forty years' journeying, only two of all the adults in the vast army that left Egypt, were found so faithful that they could see the promised land. As Moses reviewed the result of his labor, his life of trial and sacrifice seemed to have been almost in vain. [Cf: ST 03-31-81 para. 03] p. 35, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Yet he regretted not the burdens he had borne for an ungrateful people. He knew that his mission and work were of God's own appointing. When first called to lead Israel from the house of bondage, he shrank from the responsibility, and entreated the Lord to choose some man better qualified to execute this sacred work. His request was not granted. Since he had taken up the work, he had not laid it down, nor cast aside the burden. When the Lord had proposed to release him, and destroy rebellious Israel, Moses could not consent. He chose still to bear the burden which had been placed upon him. [Cf: ST 03-31-81 para. 04] p. 35, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The servant of God had enjoyed special tokens of the divine favor; he had obtained a rich experience during his travels in the wilderness, in witnessing the manifestations of God's power and glory; and in reviewing the scenes of his life, he concluded that he had made a wise decision in choosing to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. [Cf: ST 03-31-81 para. 05] p. 35, Para. 3, [1881MS].

As Moses looked back upon his experience as a leader of God's people, only one wrong act marred the illustrious record. If he could atone for that one transgression, he would not shrink from death. He was assured that repentance, humiliation, and faith in the Promised One, who was to die man's sacrifice, were all that God required. In humility and faith, Moses again confessed his sin, and implored pardon in the name of Jesus. [Cf: ST 03-31-81 para. 06] p. 35, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Angels of God presented to Moses a panoramic view of the land of promise. Every part of the country was spread out before him, not faint and uncertain in the dim distance, but standing out clear, distinct, and beautiful to his delighted vision. He seemed to be looking upon a second Eden. There were mountains clothed with cedars of Lebanon, hills gray with olives, and fragrant with the odor of the vintage, wide green plains bright with flowers and rich in fruitfulness, the palm trees of the tropics side by side with waving fields of wheat and barley, sunny valleys musical with the ripple of brooks and the song of birds, goodly cities, and fair gardens, lakes rich in "the abundance of the sea," grazing flocks upon the hillsides, and even amid the rocks a place for the wild bee to secrete its treasures. It was indeed such a land as Moses, inspired by the Spirit of God, had described to Israel: "Blessed of the Lord, . . .for the precious things of heaven, for the dew and for the deep that coucheth beneath, and for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, . . . and for the chief things of the ancient mountains, . . . and for the precious things of the earth and fullness thereof." [Cf: ST 03-31-81 para. 07] p. 35, Para. 5, [1881MS].

As the glories of the promised land faded from his sight, a scene of deeper interest passed before him. He was permitted to look down the stream of time, and to behold the first advent of our Saviour. He saw Jesus as a babe at Bethlehem. He heard the voices of the angelic host break forth in that glad song of praise to God and peace on earth. He beheld Christ's humble life in Nazareth, his ministry of love and sympathy and healing, his rejection by a proud and unbelieving nation, the agony in Gethsemane, the betrayal, the cruel mockery and scourging, and that last crowning act of nailing him to the tree. Moses saw that as he had lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so the Son of God must be lifted upon the cross, to give his life a sacrifice for men, that whosoever would believe on him should "not perish, but have eternal life." [Cf: ST 03-31-81 para. 08] p. 36, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Grief, amazement, indignation, and horror filled the heart of Moses, as he viewed the hypocrisy and Satanic hatred manifested by the Jewish nation against their Redeemer, the mighty angel who had gone before their fathers, and wrought so wonderfully for them in all their journeyings. He heard Christ's agonizing cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He saw him rise from the dead, and ascend to his Father, escorted by adoring angels. He saw the shining portals open to receive him, and the hosts of Heaven welcoming their Commander with songs of everlasting triumph. As Moses looked upon the scene, his countenance shone with a holy radiance. How small appeared his own trials and sacrifices when compared with those of the Son of God! He rejoiced that he had been permitted, even in a small measure, to be a partaker in the sufferings of Christ. [Cf: ST 03-31-81 para. 09] p. 36, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Again the vision faded, and his eye rested upon the land of Canaan, as it spread out in the distance. Then, like a tired warrior, he lay down to rest. "So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth Peor; but no man knoweth of his sepulcher unto this day." [Cf: ST 03-31-81 para. 10] p. 36, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Many who had been unwilling to heed the counsels of Moses while he was with them would now be in danger of committing idolatry over his dead body. Hence his resting-place was concealed from men. But angels of God buried the body of his faithful servant, and watched over the lonely grave. [Cf: ST 03-31-81 para. 11] p. 36, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The life of Moses was marked with supreme love to God. His piety, humility, and forbearance, had given him a strong influence over the host of Israel. His zeal and his faith in God were greater than those of any other man upon the earth. He had often addressed his people in words of stirring eloquence. No one knew better than he how to move the affections of his hearers. He conducted all matters connected with the religious interests of the people with great wisdom. [Cf: ST 03-31-81 para. 12] p. 36, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Satan exulted that he had succeeded in causing Moses to sin against God. For his transgression, Moses came under the dominion of death. Had his life not been marred with that one sin, in failing to give to God the glory of bringing water from the rock, he would have entered the

promised land, and would have been translated to Heaven without seeing death. But the servant of God was not long permitted to remain in the tomb. Christ himself with the angels who buried Moses, came down from Heaven, and called forth the sleeping saint, and bore him up in triumph to the city of God. [Cf: ST 03-31-81 para. 13] p. 36, Para. 6, [1881MS].

As the Prince of life and the shining ones approached the grave, they were opposed by Satan with his company of evil angels, who were determined that the power of death should not be broken. But the glory attending the Son of God compelled the hosts of darkness to fall back. Satan insolently claimed the body of Moses because of his one transgression. Christ condescended to enter into no dispute with his adversary but meekly referred all to his Father, saying, "The Lord rebuke thee." Moses had humbly repented of his sin, no stain rested upon his character, and his name in Heaven's book of records stood untarnished. By the power of his word, Christ opened the prison house, and set death's captive free. [Cf: ST 03-31-81 para. 14] p. 37, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Upon the mount of transfiguration, Moses was present, with Elijah, who had been translated. They were sent as the bearers of light and glory from the Father to his dear Son. Such is the last scene revealed to mortal vision in the history of that man so highly honored of God. [Cf: ST 03-31-81 para. 15] p. 37, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Moses was a type of Christ. He received the words from the mouth of God, and spoke them to the people. God saw fit to discipline Moses in the school of affliction and poverty, before he could be prepared to lead the armies of Israel in their travels from Egypt to the earthly Canaan. The Israel of God who are now passing on to the heavenly Canaan have a Captain who needed no earthly teaching to perfect him for his mission as a divine Leader. He manifested no human weakness or imperfection; yet he died to obtain for us an entrance into the promised land. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 03-31-81 para. 16] p. 37, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The Israelites deeply mourned for their departed leader, and thirty days were devoted to special services in honor of his memory. Never, till he was taken from them, had they so keenly felt the value of his wise counsels, his parental tenderness, and his unwavering faith. They knew then that his right judgment and self-sacrificing devotion, could never be replaced on earth. Yet while their hearts were filled with grief at their great loss, they knew that they were not left alone. The pillar of cloud still rested over the tabernacle by day, the pillar of fire by night, an assurance that God would be with them still, if they would be true to him. [Cf: ST 04-07-81 para. 01] p. 37, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Joshua was now the acknowledged leader of Israel. He had been prime minister to Moses during the greater part of the sojourn in the wilderness. He had seen the wonderful works of God wrought by Moses, and well understood the disposition of the people. He was one of the twelve spies sent out to search the promised land, and one of the two who gave a faithful account of its attractiveness, and who encouraged the people to go up and possess it in the strength of God. He was well qualified for his important office. The Lord had promised to be with

him as he had been with Moses, and to give him the conquest of Canaan, if he would faithfully observe the divine requirements. Joshua realized the magnitude and importance of the trust committed to him, and he had looked forward to the work before him with great anxiety; but the assurance of divine guidance and support removed his fears. [Cf: ST 04-07-81 para. 02] p. 37, Para. 5, [1881MS].

A few miles beyond the Jordan, just opposite the place where the Israelites lay encamped, was the large and strongly fortified city of Jericho. It could present a serious obstacle to the Hebrews, and Joshua now sent two spies to visit this city and learn something concerning its population and the strength of its fortifications. These men narrowly escaped death in their perilous mission; for the inhabitants, terrified and suspicious, were constantly on the alert. But the spies finally returned safely, bringing encouraging tidings,--"Truly, the Lord hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us." It had been privately declared to them in Jericho: "For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard these things our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man because of you; for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above and in earth beneath." [Cf: ST 04-07-81 para. 03] p. 38, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Arrangements were now made for crossing the Jordan. The people prepared a three days' supply of food, and the men of war made ready for battle. All heartily acquiesced in the plans of their leader, and assured him of their confidence and support." All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go. According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee; only the Lord thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses. Whosoever he be that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death; only be strong and of a good courage." [Cf: ST 04-07-81 para. 04] p. 38, Para. 2, [1881MS].

But all well knew that without divine aid they could not hope to make the passage. At this time of the year,--in the spring season,--the melting snows of the mountains had so raised the Jordan that the river overflowed its banks, making it impossible to cross at the usual fording places. God willed that the passage of the Israelites over Jordan should be miraculous. Joshua commanded the people to sanctify themselves, for upon the morrow the Lord would do wonders among them. At the appointed time, he directed the priests to take up the ark containing the law of God, and bear it before the people. "And the Lord said unto Joshua, this day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee." [Cf: ST 04-07-81 para. 05] p. 38, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The priests obeyed the commands of their leader, and went before the people carrying the ark of the covenant. Orders had been given for the multitude to fall back, so that there was a vacant space of three-fourths of a mile about the ark. The immense hosts watched with deep interest as the priests advanced down the bank of the Jordan. They saw them with the sacred ark move steadily forward, toward the angry,

surging stream, till the feet of the bearers seemed to be dipping into the waters. Then suddenly the current was borne back, while the tide below swept on, and the deep bed of the Jordan was laid bare. At the divine command the priests descended to the middle of the channel, and stood there, while the great multitudes advanced, and crossed to the farther side. Thus was impressed upon the minds of all Israel the fact that the power which stayed the waters of Jordan was the same that opened the Red Sea before their fathers forty years before. [Cf: ST 04-07-81 para. 06] p. 38, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The priests and the ark still remained in their position in the middle of the riverbed. At the Lord's command, twelve men, one out of each tribe, were directed to take each man a stone from the channel, and to carry it to the dry land, as a memorial for all future generations. "that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off." [Cf: ST 04-07-81 para. 07] p. 39, Para. 1, [1881MS].

When this had been done, the priests themselves were directed to come up, bearing the ark on their shoulders. They did so, and when their feet had reached the western shore, the waters rushed down, a resistless flood, in the natural channel of the stream. [Cf: ST 04-07-81 para. 08] p. 39, Para. 2, [1881MS].

When the kings of the Amorites and the kings of the Canaanites heard that the Lord had stayed the waters of the Jordan before the children of Israel, their hearts melted with fear. The Israelites had slain two of the kings of Moab, and now this miraculous passage over the swollen and impetuous Jordan filled all the surrounding nations with great terror. [Cf: ST 04-07-81 para. 09] p. 39, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The long years of wandering were ended; the Hebrew hosts had at last reached the promised land. In the midst of the general rejoicing, Joshua did not forget the commandments of the Lord. In accordance with the divine instruction he now performed the rite of circumcision upon all the people who had been born in the wilderness. After this ceremony, the hosts of Israel kept the passover in the plain of Jericho. [Cf: ST 04-07-81 para. 10] p. 39, Para. 4, [1881MS].

"And the Lord said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you." Heathen nations had reproached the Lord and his people because the Hebrews had failed to possess the land of Canaan, which they expected to inherit soon after leaving Egypt. Their enemies had triumphed because Israel had wandered so long in the wilderness, and they proudly lifted themselves up against God, declaring that he was not able to lead them into the land of Canaan. The Lord had now signally manifested his power and favor, in leading his people over Jordan on dry land, and their enemies could no longer reproach them. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 04-07-81 para. 11] p. 39, Para. 5, [1881MS].

As Joshua withdrew from the armies of Israel to meditate and pray for God's special presence to attend him, he beheld a man of lofty stature, clad in warlike garments, with drawn sword in his hand. Joshua did not recognize him as one of the warriors of Israel, and yet he had no appearance of being an enemy. In his zeal he accosted him, saying, "Art

thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as Captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servant? And the Captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so." [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 01] p. 39, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The glory of God hallowed the sanctuary, and for this reason the priests never entered the place sanctified by the divine presence with shoes upon their feet. Particles of dust might cleave to them, which would desecrate the holy place. Therefore the priests were required to leave their shoes in the court, before entering the sanctuary. In the court, beside the door of the tabernacle, stood a brazen laver, wherein the priests washed their hands and their feet before going in to minister before the Lord. All who officiated in the sanctuary were required of God to make special preparation to enter the place where his glory was revealed. [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 02] p. 40, Para. 1, [1881MS].

It was the Son of God who stood as an armed warrior before the leader of Israel. It was the One who had conducted the Hebrews through the wilderness, enshrouded in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 03] p. 40, Para. 2, [1881MS].

In order to impress upon the mind of Joshua the fact that his visitor was no other than Christ, the Exalted One, he said, "Put off thy shoe from off thy foot." He then gave to Joshua instructions for the taking of Jericho, that mighty stronghold whose idolatrous inhabitants had so long defied the God of Israel. [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 04] p. 40, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Encouraged by this fresh assurance of divine support, Joshua proceeded to marshal the hosts of Israel. In the foremost ranks were placed a chosen body of armed men, not now to exercise their skill in warfare, but to believe and obey the instructions given them from God. Next followed seven priests with trumpets. Then the ark of God, surrounded by a halo of divine glory, was borne by priests clad in the rich and peculiar dress denoting their sacred office. The vast army of Israel followed in perfect order, each tribe under its respective standard. Thus they compassed the city with the ark of God. No sound was heard but the tread of that mighty host and the solemn peal of the trumpets, echoing among the hills and resounding through the streets of Jericho. [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 05] p. 40, Para. 4, [1881MS].

With wonder and alarm the watchmen of the doomed city marked every move, and reported to those in authority. They knew not the meaning of all this display; but when they beheld that mighty host marching around their city once each day, in all the pomp and majesty of war, with the added grandeur of the sacred ark and the attendant priests, the impressive mystery of the scene struck terror to the hearts of princes and people. Again they would inspect their strong defenses, feeling certain they could successfully resist the most powerful attack. Many ridiculed the idea that any harm could come to them through these singular demonstrations on the part of their enemies. But others were awed as they beheld the majesty and splendor of the procession that each day wound grandly about the city. They remembered that the Red Sea

had once parted before this people, and that a passage had just been opened for them through the river Jordan. They knew not what further wonders God might work for them. They kept their gates carefully closed, and guarded them with mighty warriors. [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 06] p. 40, Para. 5, [1881MS].

For six days the host of Israel performed their circuit around the city. The seventh day came, and with the first dawn of light, Joshua marshaled the armies of the Lord. Now they were directed to march seven times around Jericho, and at a mighty peal of the trumpets to shout with a loud voice, for God had then given them the city. [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 07] p. 41, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The vast army marched solemnly around the devoted walls. All was silent as the dead, save the measured tread of many feet, and the occasional sound of the trumpet, cutting the blank stillness of the early morning. The massive walls of solid stone frowned darkly down, defying the siege of men. [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 08] p. 41, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Suddenly the long procession halts. The trumpets break forth in a blast that shakes the very earth. The united voices of all Israel rend the air with a mighty shout. The walls of solid stone with their massive towers and battlements totter and heave from their foundations, and with a crash like a thousand thunders, fall in shapeless ruin to the earth. Paralyzed with terror, the inhabitants of Jericho, with all their men of war, offer no resistance, and the hosts of Israel march in and take possession of the city. [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 09] p. 41, Para. 3, [1881MS].

How easily the armies of Heaven brought down the walls of that proud city,--that city whose mighty bulwarks forty years before struck terror to the unbelieving spies. [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 10] p. 41, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The word of God was the only weapon used. The Mighty One of Israel had said, "I have given Jericho into thine hand." If a single warrior had brought his strength to bear against the walls, the glory of God would have been lessened and his will frustrated. But the work was left to the Almighty; and had the foundation of the battlements been laid in the center of the earth and their summits reached the arch of heaven, the result would have been all the same, when the Captain of the Lord's host led his legions of angels to the attack. [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 11] p. 41, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Long had God designed to give the city of Jericho to his favored people, and to magnify his name among the nations of the earth. When he led Israel out of bondage, he purposed to give them the land of Canaan. But by their wicked murmurings and jealousy they had provoked his wrath, and he had caused them to wander for weary years in the wilderness, till all those who had insulted him with their unbelief were no more. In the capture of Jericho, God declared to the Hebrews that their fathers might have possessed the city forty years before, had they but trusted in him. [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 12] p. 41, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The history of ancient Israel is written for our benefit. Paul says,

"But with many of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted." "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 13] p. 41, Para. 7, [1881MS].

Many who profess to keep God's commandments, as did ancient Israel, have hearts of unbelief. Favored with great light and precious privileges, they will nevertheless lose the heavenly Canaan, even as the rebellious Israelites failed to enter the earthly Canaan. [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 14] p. 42, Para. 1, [1881MS].

As a people we lack faith. Few would in these days follow the directions of God, through his chosen servant, as obediently as did the armies of Israel at the taking of Jericho. The Captain of the Lord's host did not reveal himself to all the congregation. He communicated only with Joshua, who related the story of this interview to the Hebrews. It rested with them to believe or doubt the words of Joshua, to follow the commands given by him in the name of the Captain of the Lord's host, or to rebel against his directions and deny his authority. [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 15] p. 42, Para. 2, [1881MS].

They could not see the host of angels marshaled by the Son of God who led their van; and they might have reasoned: "What unmeaning movements are these, and how ridiculous the performance of marching daily around the walls of the city, blowing trumpets of rams' horns meanwhile! This can have no effect upon those strong and towering fortifications." [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 16] p. 42, Para. 3, [1881MS].

But the very plan of continuing this ceremony through so long a time prior to the final overthrow of the walls, afforded opportunity for the increase of faith among the Israelites. They were to become thoroughly impressed with the idea that their strength was not in the wisdom of man, nor in his might, but only in the God of their salvation. They were thus to become accustomed to putting themselves out of the question and relying wholly upon their divine Leader. [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 17] p. 42, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Would those who today profess to be God's people conduct themselves thus, under similar circumstances? Doubtless many would wish to follow out their own plans, would suggest ways and means of accomplishing the desired end. They would be loth to submit to so simple an arrangement, and one that reflected no glory upon themselves, save the merit of obedience. They would also question the possibility of conquering a mighty city in that manner. But the law of duty is supreme. It should wield authority over human reason. Faith is the living power that presses through every barrier, overrides all obstacles, and plants its banner in the heart of the enemy's camp. [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 18] p. 42, Para. 5, [1881MS].

God will do marvelous things for those who trust in him. The reason why his professed people have no strength, is that they trust so much to their own wisdom, and do not give the Lord an opportunity to reveal his power in their behalf. He will help his believing children in every emergency, if they will place their entire confidence in him, and

implicitly obey him. [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 19] p. 42, Para. 6, [1881MS].

There are deep mysteries in the word of God, there are mysteries in his providences, and there are mysteries in the plan of salvation, that man cannot fathom. But the finite mind, strong in its desire to satisfy curiosity, and solve the problems of infinity, neglects to follow the plain course indicated by the revealed will of God, and pries into the secrets hidden since the foundation of the world. Man builds his theories, loses the simplicity of true faith, becomes too self-important to believe the declarations of the Lord, and hedges himself in with his own conceits. [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 20] p. 42, Para. 7, [1881MS].

Many who profess to be children of God are in this position. They are weak because they trust to their own strength. God works mightily for a faithful people, who obey his word without questioning or doubt. The Majesty of Heaven, with his army of angels, leveled the walls of Jericho before his people. The armed warriors of Israel had no cause to glory in their achievements. All was done through the power of God. Let the people give up all desire for self-exaltation, let them humbly submit to the divine will, and God will again manifest his power, and bring freedom and victory to his children. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 04-14-81 para. 21] p. 43, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Soon after the conquest of Jericho, Joshua determined to take possession of Ai, a city about ten miles farther north. Accordingly, chosen men were sent to visit this place to ascertain the number of its inhabitants, and the strength of its fortifications. The spies returned with the tidings that the city contained but few defenders, and that a small number of the Hebrew host could easily overthrow it. [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 01] p. 43, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The great victory which God had gained for them had made the Israelites self-confident. Because the Lord had promised them the land of Canaan, they felt secure, and failed to realize the necessity of putting forth every effort in their power, and then humbly seeking for divine help, which alone could give them the victory. Even Joshua laid his plans for the conquest of Ai, without seeking by earnest prayer to obtain counsel from God. [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 02] p. 43, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The congregation of Israel had begun to exalt their own strength and skill, and to look with contempt upon the inhabitants of the land. Jericho had been marvelously overthrown, and an easy victory was expected at Ai. Hence three thousand men were considered sufficient to make the attack. The Israelites rushed into battle, without the assurance that God would be with them. They were unprepared for the determined resistance which they met, and, terrified by the numbers and thorough preparation of their enemies, they turned and fled. They were hotly pursued by the Canaanites, and thirty-six of their number slain. [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 03] p. 43, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The unexpected defeat brought grief and discouragement upon the whole congregation of Israel. Joshua looked upon their ill success as an expression of God's displeasure, and in deep humiliation he fell to the earth upon his face before the ark. The elders of Israel united with

him in this act of self-abasement, and dumb with astonishment and dismay they remained in this position until the even. Then Joshua presented the matter before the Lord in earnest prayer:-- [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 04] p. 43, Para. 5, [1881MS].

"Alas, O Lord God, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? Would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan! O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies? For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us around, and cut off our name from the earth; and what wilt thou do unto thy great name?" [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 05] p. 43, Para. 6, [1881MS].

Joshua manifested a true zeal for the honor of God, yet his petitions were mingled with doubt and unbelief. The thought that God had brought his people over the Jordan to deliver them up to the power of the heathen was a sinful one, unworthy of a leader of Israel. Joshua's feelings of despondency and distrust were inexcusable in view of the mighty miracles which God had wrought for the deliverance of his people, and the repeated promise that he would be with them in driving out the wicked inhabitants of the land. [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 06] p. 44, Para. 1, [1881MS].

But our merciful God did not visit his servant with wrath because of this error. He graciously accepted the humiliation and prayers of Joshua, and at the same time gently rebuked his unbelief, and then revealed to him the cause of their defeat:-- [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 07] p. 44, Para. 2, [1881MS].

"Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them; for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff. Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed; neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you." [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 08] p. 44, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Israel had sinned; and as their chief magistrate, Joshua had a work to do to search out the guilty one, and put away the sin from the congregation. Instead of concluding that the Lord had brought upon his people defeat and ruin, Joshua should rather have made diligent inquiry if all Israel had been faithful to their covenant with God. [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 09] p. 44, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The Lord had wrought wondrously for his people. It was not their skill or valor that had overthrown the mighty walls of Jericho. The power of the Lord of hosts had given them the victory. That city might be regarded as the firstfruits of Canaan, and hence was to be wholly devoted to the Lord. The only advantages which the people were to gain from their success were the destruction of their enemies, and the control of the country. Therefore they were forbidden to appropriate any of the spoils. The gold and silver, with the vessels of brass and iron, were to enrich the treasury of the Lord. Besides these, all the wealth of that great city, with every living creature, was to be

utterly consumed with fire. Should any Israelite venture to reserve a portion of the spoils, the curse which rested upon Jericho would surely fall upon him. [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 10] p. 44, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Here the Lord gave expression to his abhorrence of idolatry. Those heathen nations had turned from the worship of the living God, and were paying homage to demons. Shrines and temples, beautiful statues, and costly monuments, all the most ingenious and expensive works of art, had held the thoughts and affections of the veriest slavery to Satanic delusions. [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 11] p. 44, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The human heart is naturally inclined to idolatry and self-exaltation. The costly and beautiful monuments of heathen worship would please the fancy and engage the senses, and thus allure the Israelites from the service of God. It was to remove this temptation from his people that the Lord commanded them to destroy those relics of idolatry, on penalty of being themselves abhorred and accursed of God. [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 12] p. 45, Para. 1, [1881MS].

When Joshua was appointed as the leader of Israel, all the people entered into a solemn covenant to be loyal and obedient. They assured their leader,--"All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go. According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee; only the Lord thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses. Whosoever he be that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death; only be strong and of a good courage." [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 13] p. 45, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Yet in spite of all this, and upon the very occasion of a most glorious victory, one man in Israel ventured to transgress the command of God. When Achan saw among the spoils a magnificent Babylonish robe, his cupidity was aroused. Conscience was silenced with the plea that the richly adorned garment was too costly to be consumed, and he hastily rescued it from the flames. One step in transgression prepared the way for another, and he next appropriated the gold and silver which should have gone into the treasury of the Lord. The things which God had cursed, Achan eagerly gathered as a precious treasure, and secreted them in his tent. No human eye saw the act, but the eye of God was upon the sinner, and marked his transgression. No human voice was raised to testify against him, but God became his accuser, and appointed him to utter destruction. [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 14] p. 45, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Achan had fostered covetousness and deception in his heart, until his perceptions of sin had become blunted, and he fell an easy prey to temptation. Those who venture to indulge in a known sin will be more readily overcome the second time. The first transgression opens the door to the tempter, and he gradually breaks down all resistance and takes full possession of the citadel of the soul. Achan had listened to oft-repeated warnings against the sin of covetousness. The law of God, pointed and positive, had forbidden stealing and all deception, but he continued to cherish sin. As he was not detected and openly rebuked, he grew bolder; warnings had less and less effect upon him, until his soul was bound in chains of darkness. [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 15] p. 45, Para. 4, [1881MS].

There are many Achans among the professed people of God today. They have become so familiar with sin that they no longer perceive its heinous character. If just retribution should be visited upon all who are guilty of sins similar to that of Achan, how would the numbers in our churches be lessened! God's eye is upon the sinner, and a righteous Judge will in no case clear the guilty. [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 16] p. 45, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The history of Achan teaches the solemn lesson, that for one man's sin, the displeasure of God will rest upon a people or a nation till the transgression is searched out and punished. Sin is corrupting in its nature. One man infected with its deadly leprosy may communicate the taint to thousands. Those who occupy responsible positions as guardians of the people are false to their trust, if they do not faithfully search out and reprove sin. Many dare not condemn iniquity, lest they shall thereby sacrifice position or popularity. And by some it is considered uncharitable to rebuke sin. The servant of God should never allow his own spirit to be mingled with the reproof which he is required to give; but he is under the most solemn obligation to present the word of God, without fear or favor. He must call sin by its right name. Those who by their carelessness or indifference permit God's name to be dishonored by his professed people, are numbered with the transgressor,--registered in the record of Heaven as partakers in their evil deeds. [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 17] p. 45, Para. 6, [1881MS].

A deplorable state of coldness and backsliding exists in the Christian world today. The Spirit and power of God seems in a great measure to have departed from his professed people, and the enemy of truth rejoices at their weakness and defects. Infidelity is lifting its proud head, and denying the evidences of Christianity, because of the sins existing among professed followers of Christ. Many who are zealous for the honor of God, feel that he has indeed hid his face from them, but, like Joshua, they are more ready to complain of God than to make diligent search for the sins which have shut out his blessing. [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 18] p. 46, Para. 1, [1881MS].

There is need of earnest work to set things in order in the church of God, and it is fully as essential to do this work as it is to preach or to pray. If we would enjoy the favor of God, we must search our own hearts and lives to see if we are not cherishing that which God has cursed. Is there not some unlawful gain placed with our own possessions? Have we robbed God by retaining the portion which should be appropriated to his treasury? Have we withheld from the poor the means which God has given us to supply their necessities? [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 19] p. 46, Para. 2, [1881MS].

While we profess to revere and obey God's holy law, are we keeping the first four commandments, which require us to love God supremely? Are we keeping the last six, which teach us to love our neighbor as ourselves? Is there not a cause for our great spiritual weakness, for the lack of fervency and grace and power in preaching God's word? Do we not encourage sin, by failing to meet it with plain and pointed reproof? We may have the clearest understanding of God's word, we may make a high profession of godliness, yet if injustice or iniquity is concealed among us, we need not wonder that our souls are dry and fruitless as a withered branch. [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 20] p. 46, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The love of God will never lead to the belittling of sin; it will never cover or excuse an unconfessed wrong. Achan learned too late that God's law, like its author, is unchanging. It has to do with all our acts and thoughts and feelings. It follows us, and reaches every secret spring of action. By indulgence in sin, men are led to lightly regard the law of God. Many conceal their transgressions from their fellow-men, and flatter themselves that God will not be strict to mark iniquity. But his law is the great standard of right, and with it every act of life must be compared in that day when God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil. Purity of heart will lead to purity of life. All excuses for sin are vain. Who can plead for the sinner when God testifies against him? [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 21] p. 46, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Through divine grace, all men may live in harmony with the requirements of God's law. It is not enough that we have not blotted the page of life with revolting crimes; unless the record bears witness of noble deeds, of self-denying efforts to save not only our own souls but the souls of others, we shall be found wanting. [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 22] p. 47, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The spirit of hatred against reproof is steadily increasing. It is considered uncharitable to deal plainly and faithfully with the erring. Sin is glossed over, and thus blindness has come upon souls until it is impossible for them to discriminate between right and wrong, between sin and holiness. Many have closed their ears to reproof, and hardened their hearts against every influence which would set their sins before them. [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 23] p. 47, Para. 2, [1881MS].

We repeat, God holds the church responsible for the sins of its individual members. When coldness and spiritual declension exist, God's people should put away their pride and self-confidence and self-exaltation, and should come to the Lord in sorrow and humility, not charging him with injustice, but seeking wisdom to understand the hidden sins which shut out his presence. [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 24] p. 47, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Those who have the true love of God in their hearts will not teach that sin should be handled with gloved hands. The words of God to Joshua contain a solemn lesson for every one who professes to be a follower of Christ,--"Neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed thing from among you." By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 04-21-81 para. 25] p. 47, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The Lord not only made known to Joshua the cause of Israel's defeat, but gave him definite instructions for the detection and punishment of the criminal: "In the morning therefore ye shall be brought according to your tribes: and it shall be, that the tribe which the Lord taketh shall come according to the families thereof: and the family which the Lord shall take shall come by households; and the household which the Lord shall take shall come man by man. And it shall be, that he that is taken with the accursed thing shall be burnt with fire, he and all that he hath, because he hath transgressed the covenant of the Lord, and because he hath wrought folly in Israel." The Lord did not immediately point out the sinner, but left the matter in doubt for a time, that Israel might feel their responsibility for the sins existing among

them, and thus be led to searching of heart and humiliation before God. [Cf: ST 05-05-81 para. 01] p. 47, Para. 5, [1881MS].

In the morning the whole congregation assembled before the Lord, and a most solemn and impressive ceremony began. Step by step the investigation went on. Closer and still closer came the fearful test, until Achan was pointed out as the man whose sin had brought upon Israel the wrath of God. [Cf: ST 05-05-81 para. 02] p. 47, Para. 6, [1881MS].

And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done, hide it not from me. And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done. When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them, and behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it." A messenger was immediately despatched to the tent; he returned with the spoils, thus establishing the guilt of Achan, and vindicating the justice of God. [Cf: ST 05-05-81 para. 03] p. 48, Para. 1, [1881MS].

For a Babylonish robe and a paltry treasure of gold and silver, Achan consented to sell himself to evil, to bring upon his soul the curse of God, to forfeit his title to a rich possession in Canaan, and lose all prospect of the future, immortal inheritance in the earth made new. A fearful price indeed he paid for his ill-gotten gains. [Cf: ST 05-05-81 para. 04] p. 48, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Shall man declare the judgment upon Achan too severe? God himself pronounced the sentence, and shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? Achan's confession was made too late to be of any value. He saw the armies of Israel return from Ai defeated and disheartened, with thirty-six valiant men sacrificed; yet he did not come forward and confess his sin. He saw Joshua and the elders of Israel bowed to the earth in grief too great for words, their heads covered with dust in token of self-abasement. Had he then made confession, he would have given some proof of true penitence; but he still kept silence. He listened to the proclamation that a great crime had been committed in the camp of Israel, and even heard its character definitely stated. But he had not the honor of God or the good of Israel at heart, and his lips were sealed. Then came the solemn and searching investigation. How his soul thrilled with terror as he saw his tribe pointed out, then his family, and his household! But still he uttered no confession, until the finger of God was placed upon him. [Cf: ST 05-05-81 para. 05] p. 48, Para. 3, [1881MS].

So great had been his hardihood and persistence, that even at the last Joshua feared he would assert his innocence, and thus enlist the sympathy of the congregation and lead them to dishonor God. He would not have confessed, had he not hoped by so doing to avert the consequences of his crime. It was this hope that led to his apparent frankness in acknowledging his guilt and relating the particulars of the sin. In this manner will confessions be made by the guilty when they stand condemned and hopeless before the bar of God, when every case has been decided for life or for death. Confessions then made will

be too late to save the sinner. [Cf: ST 05-05-81 para. 06] p. 48, Para. 4, [1881MS].

There are many professed Christians whose confessions of sin are similar to that of Achan. They will, in a general way, acknowledge their unworthiness, but they refuse to confess the sins whose guilt rests upon their conscience, and which have brought the frown of God upon his people. Thus many conceal sins of selfishness, overreaching, dishonesty toward God and their neighbor, sins in the family, and many others which it is proper to confess in public. [Cf: ST 05-05-81 para. 07] p. 48, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Genuine repentance springs from a sense of the offensive character of sin. These general confessions are not the fruit of true humiliation of soul before God. They leave the sinner with a self-complacent spirit to go on as before, until his conscience becomes hardened, and warnings that once aroused him produce hardly a feeling of danger and after a time his sinful course appears right. All too late his sins will find him out, in that day when they shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever. There is a vast difference between admitting facts after they are proved, and confessing sins known only to ourselves and God. [Cf: ST 05-05-81 para. 08] p. 49, Para. 1, [1881MS].

While the Israelites were still encamped on the east side of Jordan, the tribes of Gad and Reuben, seeing that the country was favorable for their occupation of raising sheep and cattle, desired to settle there, and accordingly presented their request to Moses. The great leader was displeased at this request, supposing that these tribes were seeking to avoid the conflicts which their brethren must encounter in dispossessing the Canaanites. He said, "Shall your brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here?" Moses feared that sloth and cowardice, the result of unbelief, prompted this suggestion, and that these tribes would incur the Lord's displeasure. [Cf: ST 05-05-81 para. 09] p. 49, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The men of Gad and Reuben assured their leader that they would not shun the burdens and responsibilities which the Lord had laid upon all Israel. After preparing homes for their families they would take their position beside their brethren, in all their conflicts, until every man had come in possession of his inheritance. Moses consented to this, but fearing that these tribes might yet fail to keep their promise, he added "If ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord, and be sure your sin will find you out." [Cf: ST 05-05-81 para. 10] p. 49, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Here is a lesson which professed Christians at the present day may study with profit. God's displeasure rests upon those who seek only their own ease and temporal prosperity, leaving their brethren to endure hardship and privation and to bear heavy responsibilities in the church. There is an unceasing conflict between the cause of truth and holiness and that of error and ungodliness. All who claim to be children of God must be armed for the battle. God has not left this warfare upon a few soldiers, while the others rest at ease. Said the great apostle, to his Corinthian brethren, "I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened." All who profess any interest in the cause of God, the advancement of truth, and the conversion of sinners, should be soldiers in the Lord's army. They should have one interest, one

motive, one object, as long as life shall last. The great reason why so little is accomplished in the cause of God is indolence and indifference of his professed people. [Cf: ST 05-05-81 para. 11] p. 49, Para. 4, [1881MS].

"Satan's power is increasing, he is terribly in earnest, knowing that his time is short, he is working with all deceivableness of unrighteousness." Those who would escape his wiles must be vigilant and determined. If we would meet the demands for this time, we must put on the whole armor, and go forth with energy, perseverance, and unswerving faith. In God alone is our strength. Indolence and slothfulness, presumption and self-confidence, will alike bring defeat and destruction. God takes cognizance of the works of all. Those who have sought their ease, and shunned care, anxiety and labor for God's cause, may be sure their sin will find them out. Those who, like Achan, cherish selfishness, avarice and deception, may be sure that God's eye is upon them. As he searched out Achan, he will search them out, as he pronounced a curse upon Achan, he will surely pronounce a curse upon them. [Cf: ST 05-05-81 para. 12] p. 49, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Some may claim that these severe denunciations belong only to the Jewish age, that we are now in a dispensation of mercy rather than of wrath and condemnation. But New Testament history presents many instances which show that the same sins which brought the wrath of God upon his people anciently will bring his wrath upon his church today. [Cf: ST 05-05-81 para. 13] p. 50, Para. 1, [1881MS].

John the Baptist, addressed the scribes and Pharisees, who made high claims to learning and piety: "Ye generation of vipers who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? bring forth therefore, fruits worthy of repentance." And although Christ had such a love for humanity, as was never possessed by man or angel, he uttered the fearful sentence, "And thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven [in light and privilege] shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee." [Cf: ST 05-05-81 para. 14] p. 50, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The judgment visited upon Ananias and Sapphira was to be a warning to the church through all time. The sin committed by these persons was similar to that of Achan, and the power of God searched them out and brought swift retribution upon them. He who bade Joshua, rise from his position of humiliation and search within the camp of Israel for the reason of their defeat, the same Jesus searched out the hidden iniquity of Ananias and his wife and told Peter what course he must pursue toward them. [Cf: ST 05-05-81 para. 15] p. 50, Para. 3, [1881MS].

While the servants of God are in constant danger of indulging a zeal that is wholly human, and while great harm is done by those who seem to be in their element in censuring, reproving, and condemning their brethren, there is fully as great danger of going to the opposite extreme, and making the sum and substance of Christian duty consist in love. The apostle Paul writes to his son Timothy, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." This work is just as essential to the prosperity of the church as is the exercise of gentleness, forbearance

and love. Those who are consecrated to God will be as faithful to reprove and rebuke sin with all longsuffering and doctrine, as to comfort and encourage the desponding, and strengthen the weak. All who love God will show their abhorrence of sin. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 05-05-81 para. 16] p. 50, Para. 4, [1881MS].

After Joshua had executed the divine sentence upon Achan, and had thus turned away from Israel the wrath of God, he was commanded to marshal all the men of war and again advance against Ai. The armies of Heaven now fought for Israel, and their enemies were put to flight. [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 01] p. 50, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Mindful that their only hope was in obedience to God, Joshua now assembled all the people as Moses had commanded, and rehearsed to them the blessings which would follow their obedience to the law, and the curses that would fall upon them should they disregard it. Then he repeated before them the law of ten commandments, and also all the statutes and precepts which Moses had recorded. Again Joshua led Israel forth to battle with their enemies. The Lord wrought mightily for his people, and their armies pressed forward, gaining fresh courage with every victory. [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 02] p. 51, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Seven years after their entrance into the promised land the whole congregation assembled, and the sacred tabernacle, which had been so long borne with them in their journeyings, was permanently set up at Shiloh. The land was now divided among the several tribes, and the conquest went on with renewed vigor, until "Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the Lord said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. And the land rested from war." The glorious promises which God had made to Israel had been fulfilled. "There failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass." [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 03] p. 51, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Joshua now summoned the men of war who had chosen their inheritance on the east side of Jordan, and commended them for their courage and fidelity. They had fully kept their pledge to Moses, having shared all the conflicts of their brethren, and now they were at liberty to return to their families and their homes. [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 04] p. 51, Para. 3, [1881MS].

As these tribes were to dwell at a distance from the tabernacle, Joshua feared that they might lose their interest in its services and thus be led to depart from God. With deep solicitude he exhorted them: "Take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the Lord charged you, to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul." [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 05] p. 51, Para. 4, [1881MS].

When these tribes had returned to their possessions, they united to erect a large altar near the place where the Israelites had miraculously crossed the river. This altar was not designed for sacrifice or worship, but simply as a witness that, although separated by the river, they were of the same faith as their brethren on the other side, and were entitled to equal privileges in the tabernacle at Shiloh and the services there performed. [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 06] p.

51, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Although those who engaged in erecting this altar were actuated by the most worthy motives, yet it threatened to cause serious difficulty between them and their brethren across the Jordan; for the latter, hearing what had been done, supposed that this altar was designed to take the place of the tabernacle at Shiloh, and that it would thus lead the people away from the true faith and bring the wrath of God upon the whole nation. [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 07] p. 51, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The congregation of Israel became excited and indignant, and determined to make war upon the offenders at once. But men of caution suggested the better plan of sending a representative from each tribe to require an explanation of their motive in erecting this altar. Phinehas the high priest, and ten princes, one from each tribe, were sent. They considered the guilt of their brethren already proved, and met them with sharp rebuke. They accused them of rebelling against the Lord, and bade them remember how the wrath of God had been visited upon Israel for joining themselves to Baal-Peor. Notwithstanding the terrible judgments upon the guilty on that occasion, many were still cherishing the same sins, and Phinehas and his companions feared that their brethren, being surrounded by the worshipers of this idol, might again be led to partake of their iniquity. [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 08] p. 52, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The Lord had positively commanded that no sacrifice should be offered except at the door of the tabernacle. In behalf of all Israel, Phinehas stated to the children of Gad and Reuben that if they were unwilling to abide in that land without an altar for sacrifice and worship, they would be welcomed to a share in the possessions and privileges of their brethren on the other side. Again he warned them not to depart from God. Achan and his whole family had perished because they transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and for that one man's sin, all the congregation of Israel had suffered. What, then, would be the dire result if that large company should be disobedient to God? [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 09] p. 52, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The Reubenites and their associates courteously permitted Phinehas to finish his discourse before attempting to make their defense. Then they replied to his accusation in a manner which not only does them the highest credit, but teaches a forcible lesson of Christian forbearance. They expressed no anger or resentment at the ungrounded suspicions and sharp rebukes of their brethren; but in the most sincere and solemn manner they declared their innocence, and appealed to the Lord, who knew their hearts, to testify against them if they were at fault, declaring that if guilty of the sin attributed to them, their lives would justly be forfeited. [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 10] p. 52, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Then they proceeded to explain their motives and intentions in the building of the altar. They had feared that in future years their children might be excluded from the tabernacle by their brethren on the other side, as having no part in Israel. Then this altar, erected after the pattern of the altar of the Lord at Shiloh, would be a witness that its builders were also worshipers of the living God. [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 11] p. 52, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The ambassadors readily accepted this candid explanation and expressed great joy that the hearts of their brethren were still true to the God of Jacob. The tidings were immediately carried back to the congregation of Israel, and all thoughts of war were dismissed, and the people united in heartfelt rejoicing and praise to God. [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 12] p. 52, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Had the suspected tribes stood upon their dignity and answered their accusers in a defiant manner, war would have been the result, and many lives must have been sacrificed. But their willingness to explain, their forbearance and courtesy, settled everything without a rupture. [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 13] p. 52, Para. 6, [1881MS].

Upon their altar the children of Gad and Reuben now placed an inscription pointing out the purpose for which it was erected, and they said, "It shall be a witness between us that the Lord is God." Thus they sought to prevent future misunderstanding concerning their religious faith and their connection with Israel, and to remove anything which might be a source of stumbling to their brethren. [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 14] p. 53, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The difficulties and misunderstandings that still arise among the people of God are often similar in their nature and results to those that threatened to prove so disastrous to Israel. The ten tribes were filled with fear lest the people whom God had accepted as his own, should become divided in interest and worship, hence their promptness in rebuking at once the supposed defection of their brethren. Yet in that very effort to maintain the honor of God and the purity of Israel, we see what serious and even fatal results might have followed from a simple misunderstanding. [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 15] p. 53, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Men who were honestly seeking to promote the cause of true religion were misjudged and severely reprimanded. The wisdom manifested in their course under these trying circumstances is worthy of imitation. What great evils might be averted if such a course were followed by the members of all our churches. An individual may be unjustly suspected or censured by his brethren, but he should not for this reason yield to anger, or cherish a desire for retaliation. Such an occasion furnishes an opportunity for the development of the precious grace of meekness and forbearance. [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 16] p. 53, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Care should be exercised by all Christians, to shun the two extremes, of laxness in dealing with sin on the one hand, and harsh judgment and groundless suspicion on the other. The Israelites who manifested so much zeal against the men of Gad and Reuben remembered how, in Achan's case, God had rebuked the lack of vigilance to discover the sins existing among them. Then they resolved to act promptly and earnestly in the future; but in seeking to do this they went to the opposite extreme. Instead of meeting their brethren with censure, they should first have made courteous inquiry to learn all the facts in the case. [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 17] p. 53, Para. 4, [1881MS].

There are still many who are called to endure false accusation. Like the men of Israel, they can afford to be calm and considerate, because they are in the right. They should remember with gratitude that God is acquainted with all that is misunderstood and misinterpreted by men,

and they may safely leave all in his hands. He will as surely vindicate the cause of those who put their trust in him, as he searched out the hidden guilt of Achan. [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 18] p. 53, Para. 5, [1881MS].

How much of evil would be averted, if all, when falsely accused, would avoid recrimination, and in its stead employ mild, conciliating words. And at the same time, those who in their zeal to oppose sin have indulged unjust suspicions, should ever seek to take the most favorable view of their brethren, and should rejoice when they are found guiltless. [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 19] p. 53, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The great diversity of religious faith, and the alienation of feeling existing among professed Christians, are serious hindrances to the progress of the gospel. Happy will it be for God's people when they shall be able to unite zeal and firmness with meekness and forbearance. As religious controversies are usually conducted, they are productive of more harm than good. In many cases there is manifested so little Christian humility and forbearance that the unbeliever is confirmed in his doubts and prejudices. Sinners are gratified to see the differences and animosities existing among the professed followers of Christ. Many of the unconverted point to these wrongs to excuse their own neglect. [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 20] p. 54, Para. 1, [1881MS].

It is the will of God that union and harmony should exist among his people. Our Saviour prayed that his disciples might be one, as he is one with the Father. It should be our constant aim to reach this state of unity; but to do this we are not to sacrifice one principle of truth. It is through obedience to the truth that we are to be sanctified; for while Jesus prayed that his followers might be one, he prayed also, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." We are exhorted to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace. This is the evidence of our discipleship. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another;" and conversely, our Saviour desired that his disciples might be one, that the world might know that the Father had sent him. What a thought! that the love and unity among Christians are presented as proof of our Saviour's divine mission to the world. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 05-12-81 para. 21] p. 54, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Under the leadership of Joshua, the Israelites as a nation maintained their allegiance to God, and his blessing attended them. Among the wooded hills and fertile valleys of the promised land, doubly attractive after the long desert wanderings, the chosen tribes dwelt safely; and the years passed on, peaceful and prosperous. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 01] p. 54, Para. 3, [1881MS].

As Joshua felt the infirmities of age stealing upon him, and realized that his labors must soon cease, he assembled the elders, the judges, and the officers of Israel, that he might communicate to them his last warnings and admonitions. The people looked upon the form of their veteran general, who had led them on from victory to victory, and they were ready to ascribe to him the honor of placing them in possession of that good land. But, like his great predecessor, Joshua showed them that their enemies had been conquered because the Lord had fought for Israel, and that God alone should have all the glory. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 02] p. 54, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Although the Canaanites had been subdued, they still possessed a considerable portion of the land promised to Israel; and Joshua exhorted his people not to settle down at ease, and forget the Lord's command to utterly dispossess these idolatrous nations. Lest the Israelites should be disheartened, he assured them that if they would be true to God, his presence and power would attend them in their future conflicts as in the past. He earnestly sought to inspire their hearts with faith and courage. "Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left." [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 03] p. 54, Para. 5, [1881MS].

He repeated the instructions given by Moses, that they were to form no allegiance with the idolatrous nations that God had appointed to utter destruction. They were forbidden to manifest the least respect for the gods of the heathen, to take oath by their names, or to join in their worship in any manner. They were warned that familiarity with idolatry would remove their abhorrence of it, and would expose them to God's displeasure. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 04] p. 55, Para. 1, [1881MS].

We are in as great danger from contact with infidelity as were the Israelites from intercourse with idolaters. The productions of genius and talent too often conceal the deadly poison. Under an attractive guise, themes are presented and thoughts expressed that attract, interest, and corrupt the mind and heart. Thus, in our Christian land, piety wanes, and skepticism and ungodliness are triumphant. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 05] p. 55, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The Israelites were exhorted to make the Lord first in their thoughts and affections, and to cleave unto him as their source of strength. "For the Lord hath driven out from before you great nations and strong; but as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day." Joshua reiterated the words of Moses: "One man of you shall chase a thousand; for the Lord your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you." [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 06] p. 55, Para. 3, [1881MS].

He warned the people that if they should in any manner unite with the remnant of the heathen nations still among them, and contract marriages with them, the protecting care of God would surely be removed from Israel, and those very nations would be the instruments of their punishment. "They shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you." [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 07] p. 55, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Joshua declared to the people that his work among them was done; for he was soon to die. He appealed to themselves as witnesses that God had faithfully fulfilled his promises to them. "And ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof." He assured them that as the Lord had fulfilled his promises, so would he fulfill his threatenings. If they were disobedient to his requirements, he would destroy them, as he had destroyed their enemies. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 08] p. 55, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The Lord has not changed. His character is the same today as in the days of Joshua. He is true, merciful, compassionate, faithful in the performance of his word, both in promises and threatenings. One of the greatest dangers that besets the people of God today, is that of association with the ungodly; especially in uniting themselves in marriage with unbelievers. With many, the love for the human eclipses the love for the divine. They take the first step in backsliding by venturing to disregard the Lord's express command; and complete apostasy is too often the result. It has ever proved a dangerous thing for men to carry out their own will in opposition to the requirements of God. Yet it is a hard lesson for men to learn that God means what he says. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 09] p. 55, Para. 6, [1881MS].

As a rule, those who choose for their friends and companions, persons who reject Christ and trample upon God's law, eventually become of the same mind and spirit. We should ever feel a deep interest in the salvation of the impenitent, and should manifest toward them a spirit of kindness and courtesy; but we can safely choose for our friends only those who are the friends of God. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 10] p. 56, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Those who make the word of God their rule of life are hated by the world. The ungodly are not willing to have their consciences aroused; and the silent example of Christ's true followers is a constant reproof. There are many professed Christians who partake of the spirit of the world, and love its friendship. But none need be deceived by their example; for the word of truth declares that the friendship of the world is enmity with God. Those who take human feeling and human reasoning for their guide, will as surely separate from the wisdom of God, as did ancient Israel when they forsook the Lord to serve Baal and Ashtaroth. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 11] p. 56, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Once more, before his final removal from the people of his care, Joshua assembled the chosen tribes to speak to them the words of God. He rehearsed before them their own history and the history of their fathers from the days of Abraham. He did not conceal their errors and mistakes; and with earnestness and gratitude he dwelt upon the dealings of God with them. He reminded them that it was not their own strength or valor which had given them the land of Canaan. God himself had said, "I have given you a land for which ye did not labor, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them. Of the vineyards and olive yards which ye planted not, do you eat." [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 12] p. 56, Para. 3, [1881MS].

In view of all that God had done for them, Joshua exhorted the people, "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord." The human mind is naturally inclined to dwell upon the things which are seen and heard, and to neglect the things which are unseen. The Lord had done marvelous things for his people in the manifesting of his power as the only true and living God; yet many had been led astray by the Satanic delusion that God might be represented by material objects, the works of men's hands. By the contemplation of these things, their minds were diverted from God. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 13] p. 56, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Among the multitudes that came up out of Egypt were many who had been worshipers of idols; and such is the power of habit that the practice was secretly continued, to some extent, even after the settlement in Canaan. Joshua was sensible of this evil among the Israelites, and he clearly perceived the dangers that would result. He earnestly desired to see a thorough reformation among the Hebrew host. He knew that unless the people took a decided stand to serve the Lord with all their hearts, they would continue to separate themselves farther and farther from him. Then would the Lord remove his protecting care, and suffer them to be driven out and scattered, by the very people whom he had commanded them to destroy. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 14] p. 56, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Said Joshua, "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land ye dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Joshua endeavored to show the people that God's requirements were just and merciful. He would lead them to serve him, not by compulsion, but willingly. Love to God is the very foundation of pure and undefiled religion. To engage in his service as an unpleasant task, merely from hope of reward or fear of punishment, would bring no sweet peace, no assurance of God's favor. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 15] p. 57, Para. 1, [1881MS].

While a portion of the Hebrew host were spiritual worshipers, many were mere formalists; no zeal or earnestness characterized their service. Some were idolaters at heart, who would be ashamed to acknowledge themselves as such. Joshua urged them to consider in all its bearings the important matter which he had set before them, and to decide if they really desired to live as did the idolatrous nations around them. If it seemed evil to them to serve the Lord, if his requirements seemed a grievous exaction, he bade them that day choose whom they would serve,--the idols worshiped by their fathers from whom Abraham was called out, or the gods of the Amorites, "in whose land ye dwell." [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 16] p. 57, Para. 2, [1881MS].

In these last words was a keen rebuke to the idolatry of Israel. The gods of the heathen had no power to bestow peace or prosperity. Their worshipers had ascribed to them praise and honor for all the bounties bestowed by the mercy and love of God. Hence the Lord had removed from them his blessing, and had left them to the mercies of the gods in whom they trusted. That wicked people had been destroyed; and the good land which they once possessed, had been given to God's people. Then what suicidal folly for Israel to choose the gods for worshiping whom the Amorites had been destroyed! [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 17] p. 57, Para. 3, [1881MS].

When a man comes to his right mind, he begins to reflect upon his relation to his Maker. It is moral madness to prefer the praise of men to the favor of God, the rewards of iniquity to the treasures of Heaven, the husks of sin to the spiritual food God gives his children. Yet how many who display intelligence and shrewdness in worldly things, manifest an utter disregard to those things that pertain to their eternal interest. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 18] p. 57, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Joshua assured the Israelites that of themselves they could not serve

the Lord. The natural heart is a battlefield, upon which there is a constant warfare; conscience seeking to hold sway, and passion also struggling for the victory. God would not grant them his favor and support while they persisted in transgression. If they honored him, he would honor them. If they should forsake him, and serve strange gods, he would forsake them. As God is a being of perfect truth and holiness, it was impossible for them to serve him and yet continue in sin; for he could not unite with iniquity. Only by thorough repentance and reformation of life, could they hope to secure the divine favor. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 19] p. 57, Para. 5, [1881MS].

God's plan for the salvation of men, is perfect in every particular. If we will faithfully perform our allotted part, all will be well with us. It is man's apostasy that causes discord, and brings wretchedness and ruin. God never uses his power to oppress the creatures of his hand. He never requires more than man is able to perform; never punishes his disobedient children more than is necessary to bring them to repentance; or to deter others from following their example. Rebellion against God is inexcusable. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 20] p. 58, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The judgments of God quickly following upon transgression, his counsels and reproofs, the manifestations of his love and mercy, and the oft-repeated exhibitions of his power,--all were a part of God's plan to preserve his people from sin, to make them pure and holy, that he might be their strength and shield and their exceeding great reward. But the persistent transgressions of the Israelites, their readiness to depart from God, and their forgetfulness of his mercies, showed that many had chosen to be servants of sin, rather than children of the Most High. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 21] p. 58, Para. 2, [1881MS].

God had created them, Christ had redeemed them. From the house of bondage their cry of anguish went up to the throne of God, and he put forth his arm to rescue them; for their sake, bringing desolation upon the whole land of Egypt. He had granted them high honors. He had made them his peculiar people, and had showered upon them unnumbered blessings. If they would obey him, he would make them a mighty nation,--a praise and excellence in all the earth. God designed to magnify his name through his chosen people, by showing the vast difference existing between the righteous and the wicked, the servants of God and the worshipers of idols. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 22] p. 58, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Joshua sought to show his people the inconsistency of their course of backsliding. He wished them to feel that the time had come to make a decided change, to put away every vestige of idolatry, and to turn to the Lord with full purpose of heart. He endeavored to impress upon their minds the fact that open apostasy would not be more offensive to God than hypocrisy, and a lifeless form of worship. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 23] p. 58, Para. 4, [1881MS].

If the favor of God was worth anything, it was worth everything. Thus Joshua had decided; and after weighing the whole matter, he had determined to serve him with full purpose of heart. And more than this, he would endeavor to induce his family to pursue the same course. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 24] p. 58, Para. 5, [1881MS].

God said of Abraham, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the ways of the Lord to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." The promises of God to Abraham and his posterity, and through Christ to the nations of the earth, may appear to have been unconditional. But such was not the case. Whether Abraham would share in their fulfillment, was determined by the course which he pursued. The Lord approved his faithfulness in the government of his household. Abraham firmly restrained evil, and endeavored by precept and example to promote justice and godliness among them. Thus he worked in harmony with God, faithfully performing his part in the great plan. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 25] p. 58, Para. 6, [1881MS].

Our dangers are similar to those which threatened the prosperity of ancient Israel. The oft-repeated warnings against idolatry addressed to the Hebrew host, are no less applicable to us. Everything which leads the affections away from God is an idol, and betrays us into sin. If we serve God willingly and joyfully, preferring his service to the service of sin and Satan; if we choose him, openly and boldly turning from all the attractions and vanities of the world, we shall enjoy his blessing in this life, and shall dwell forever in his presence in the future life. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 26] p. 59, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The Lord our God is a jealous God. He is just and holy He will not be trifled with. He reads a deceptive heart. He abhors a double mind. He hates lukewarmness. We cannot serve God and mammon, for they are antagonistic. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 05-19-81 para. 27] p. 59, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Joshua's farewell address to Israel produced a deep impression upon them. They knew that they were listening to his dying testimony, and that no feeling of pride, ambition, or self-interest could influence him. By long experience, the aged leader had learned how to most effectually reach the hearts of the people. He realized the importance of the present opportunity, and improved it to the utmost. [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 01] p. 59, Para. 3, [1881MS].

His earnest appeals called forth the response: "God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods; for the Lord our God, he it is that brought us up, and our fathers, out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed. And the Lord drove out from before us all the people, even the Amorites which dwelt in the land; therefore will we also serve the Lord, for he is our God." [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 02] p. 59, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Still Joshua warned the people to make no rash promises which they would be unwilling to fulfill, but to carefully consider the matter, and decide upon their future course. "If ye forsake the Lord, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good." Thus faithfully he sought to arouse them to a higher sense of God's claims upon them, and a deeper conviction that their only safety was in obedience to his law. [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 03] p. 59, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The congregation answered with one accord, "We will serve the Lord.

And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the Lord, to serve him. And they said, We are witnesses. Now therefore put away (said he) the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the Lord God of Israel. And the people said unto Joshua, The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey." [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 04] p. 59, Para. 6, [1881MS].

This solemn covenant was recorded in the book of the law, to be sacredly preserved. Joshua then set up a great stone under an oak that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. "And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God." Here Joshua plainly declares that his instructions and warnings to the people were not his own words, but the words of God. This great stone would stand to testify to succeeding generations of the event which it was set up to commemorate, and would be a witness against the people, should they ever again degenerate into idolatry. [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 05] p. 59, Para. 7, [1881MS].

Israel was the Lord's peculiar treasure. The high estimation in which he held them is shown by the mighty miracles wrought in their behalf. As a father would deal with a beloved son, so had the Lord succored, disciplined, and chastened Israel. He sought to inspire in their hearts that love for his character and requirements which would lead to willing obedience. [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 06] p. 60, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Through his people Israel, God designed to give to the world a knowledge of his will. His promises and threatenings, his instructions and reproofs, the wonderful manifestations of his power among them, in blessings for obedience, and judgment for transgression and apostasy,-- all were designed for the education and development of religious principle among the people of God until the close of time. Therefore it is important that we acquaint ourselves with the history of the Hebrew host, and ponder with care the dealings of God with them. [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 07] p. 60, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The words which God spoke to Israel by his Son were spoken for us also in these last days. The same Jesus who, upon the mount, taught his disciples the far-reaching principles of the law of God, instructed ancient Israel from the cloudy pillar and from the tabernacle, by the mouth of Moses and Joshua. The lessons were the same,--that love for God would lead to purity of heart, and would be manifested in good works. [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 08] p. 60, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Those who place in contrast the teachings of Christ when he was upon the earth, and the principles of true religion as taught in the days of Moses, know not what they assert. Christ cannot be arrayed against himself. When he was upon earth, our Saviour made sinners feel that they could not trample upon the law of God with impunity. The same lesson was taught to ancient Israel. In the days of Moses sin could be pardoned only through the atoning sacrifice of the Son of God. Jesus taught the same when he walked as a man among the children of men. [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 09] p. 60, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Religion in the days of Moses and Joshua was the same as religion

today. When Christ dwells in the heart, his spirit will be manifested in the life. It will be calm, patient, noble, and unselfish. The marked contrast which exists between the lives of those who serve God and those who serve him not is a constant rebuke to the sinner. The world rejected Christ because his life was in such marked contrast to their own. In every generation, those who are seeking to follow his example will be distinct from the world. [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 10] p. 60, Para. 5, [1881MS].

By various means the Lord has sought to preserve the knowledge of his dealings with the children of men. Moses, just prior to his death, not only rehearsed to Israel the important events in their history, but at the command of God be embodied them in sacred verse. Thus the glorious and thrilling scenes of Israel's triumph, the sublime and awful manifestations of infinite majesty and power, the divine requirements, promises, and threatenings, clothed with all the beauty of poetic genius, were to be present for all the generations to come. Thus the record of God's requirements and his dealings with Israel would not appear uninteresting or repulsive, but attractive and entertaining. [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 11] p. 60, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The people of Israel were required to commit to memory this poetic history, and to teach it to their children and their children's children. It was to be chanted by the congregation when assembled for worship, and to be repeated by the people as they went in and out about their daily duties. This song was not only historical, but prophetic. It recounted the wonderful dealings of God with his people in the past, and also foreshadowed the great events of the future, the final victory of the faithful when Christ shall appear the second time in power and glory. [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 12] p. 61, Para. 1, [1881MS].

It was the imperative duty of parents to so impress these words upon the susceptible minds of their children, that they might never be forgotten. "Put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel. For when I shall have brought them into the land which I swear unto their fathers, that floweth with milk and honey; and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and waxen fat; then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and provoke me, and break my covenant. And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify against them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed; for I know their imagination which they go about, even now, before I have brought them into the land which I swear." [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 13] p. 61, Para. 2, [1881MS].

In after generations, this prophetic song would explain the dealings of God with his people, and reveal the cause of their dispersed and scattered condition. Thus would it vindicate the justice of God, and establish the divine inspiration of Moses. It would condemn the wickedness of Israel, and would ever be a convicting power to call them back to their allegiance to God as the only hope of deliverance. [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 14] p. 61, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The great stone set up by Joshua was to stand as a constant reminder to Israel of the covenant which they had made with God, and a silent witness of their faithfulness or apostasy. So also the song of Moses was to testify against them, should they depart from God. Many of the

Israelites were unacquainted with the books of Moses. But it was the purpose of God that this inspired song should awaken in thoughtful minds a desire to learn more of God's wonderful dealings with his people, and lead to the study of his revealed word. Thus would they be led to realize the goodness of God toward them, and their duty to love, and obey, and worship him. [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 15] p. 61, Para. 4, [1881MS].

If it was necessary for God's ancient people to often call to mind his dealings with them in mercy and judgment, in counsel and reproof, it is equally important that we contemplate the truths delivered to us in his word,--truth which, if heeded, will lead us to humility and submission, and obedience to God. We are to be sanctified through the truth. The word of God presents special truths for every age. The dealings of God with his people in the past should receive our careful attention. We should learn the lessons which they are designed to teach us. But we are not to rest content with them. God is leading out his people step by step. Truth is progressive. The earnest seeker will be constantly receiving light from Heaven. What is truth? should ever be our inquiry. [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 16] p. 61, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The prophetic word shows clearly that we are living near the close of this world's history, and that we may soon expect the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of Heaven. As the Israelites journeyed toward the earthly Canaan, so are we pressing onward to reach the heavenly Canaan. The history of their backslidings is repeated among the people of God today. Faith and piety are waning. Many who once loved the appearing of Christ, are setting their affections upon this world, and are conforming to its habits and customs. The fear of God is not kept before the mind, and the natural desires and inclinations gain control. [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 17] p. 62, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The apostle presents before us the history of the children of Israel, and states that these things are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. He exhorts us not to lust after evil things as they lusted. The very same enemy that tempted the people of God in ancient times, will tempt his people in these last days. We should be earnest, active, and vigilant, in making ready for the appearing of our Lord. Every device will be employed to lead men away from God. Infidelity is exerting itself to the utmost. The present age is characterized by intense earnestness and activity in worldly pursuits; but zeal and energy in the service of God are sadly deficient. [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 18] p. 62, Para. 2, [1881MS].

In the days before the flood, the people were so engrossed in worldly things, and so corrupted by iniquity, that the Spirit of God ceased to strive with men. When God's word loses its power upon the people, a Satanic infatuation leads them in direct opposition to his revealed will. Christians are absorbed in the questions, What shall we eat, and what shall we drink? and wherewithal shall we be clothed? When the energies are employed in buying and selling, planting and building, to the neglect of eternal interests; when the truth of God addressed to the ear ceases to impress the mind or affect the heart, the preaching is in vain; the hearing is in vain. Then indeed will the condition of the world become as it was in the days of Noah. [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 19] p. 62, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Many of the things of this life which are a blessing when temperately enjoyed, become a curse when their use is carried to excess. The dressing mania is a device of Satan. Love of dress is an idolatrous shrine at which the women of this age are worshiping. They are so fully occupied with outward display, that they have no time to pray, no time to become acquainted with the Scriptures, no time to improve the talents which God has given them. They have no time to cleanse the soul temple from its idolatrous shrines; and at last the Spirit ceases to strive with many, and they go down to the grave unprepared. The temptation to idolatry is even greater today than in the days of Israel. [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 20] p. 62, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Concerning the last days, our Saviour asks the significant question: "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" The Scriptures declare that as it was in the days of Noah, before the judgments of God fell upon the corrupt inhabitants, so shall it be in the last days, just prior to the pouring out of God's unmingled wrath upon the earth. Men will be living a godless life, professing to be Christians, but by their acts contradicting their profession. They will be heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. Is not this idolatry? and is not the guilt of God's professed people as much greater than was that of ancient Israel, as the light which we enjoy is greater than theirs? [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 21] p. 63, Para. 1, [1881MS].

God would have his ministers in this dispensation keep before the people, not only the mercy and love of Christ, but the doctrines of the Bible. These should be presented in simple language, adapted to the comprehension of children. Let the young be faithfully instructed in the truths of God's word. The history of the past, the present, and the future, as revealed in the sacred Scriptures, should be taught in a pleasing, yet serious manner. Let the dealings of God with his people be rehearsed again and again, until the youth become familiar with the record. [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 22] p. 63, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The lives and teachings of Christian parents should be in marked contrast with those of unbelievers. Worldlings teach their children to love display, and to bow to the idol of fashion. They sacrifice themselves and their children upon this altar of Moloch. But Christians who profess to be seeking the heavenly Canaan, should obey the instructions of the Bible. We urge modern Israel to lay aside their ornaments, their jewels of silver and gold and precious stones, to put off their costly apparel, and to seek for the inward adorning, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. Let children be educated, not to become devotees of fashion, but to be servants of God. [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 23] p. 63, Para. 3, [1881MS].

If it was important for Israel to teach their children of the wonderful works of God, his character and requirements, it is important that we put forth at least equal efforts to teach our children the same truths. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 05-26-81 para. 24] p. 63, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Although the last admonitions of Joshua, and the solemn covenant which Israel had made with God, seemed to make a deep impression upon them, yet time soon proved that the influence was not permanent. After the

death of their leader and of the elders who were associated with him, the people began gradually to relapse into idolatry. [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 01] p. 63, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Joshua had not been permitted to drive out all the inhabitants of the land. A remnant of the heathen nations was spared for a time, that the Lord might through them test the faith and obedience of his people, and that those whose hearts were cherishing idolatry might be revealed and punished. [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 02] p. 63, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The generation that succeeded Joshua were directed to carry forward the work which he had left unfinished; but they did not obey the divine command to utterly destroy the heathen. Some of the tribes made war on the Canaanites, but failing to receive the help which they should have had from their brethren, they became weary of the conflict, and spared their most dangerous enemies. Frequent intercourse soon removed all fear of danger; and now the Israelites took another step in transgression, by connecting themselves in marriage with the heathen. When this was done, the difficulties of the situation were greatly increased. It was no easy matter to make war with relatives, and to extirpate or banish their own kindred. [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 03] p. 63, Para. 7, [1881MS].

By their disregard of God's command, the Israelites had woven for themselves a net in which their feet were soon entangled. Ere long, many of the Hebrews were induced to attend heathen festivals. Lascivious songs and licentious indulgence, formed a prominent part in the idolatrous worship. Exposed to these contaminating influences, the Israel of God steadily became corrupted. In imitation of the gods of the heathen, images were made to represent Jehovah, and thus idolatry spread like a plague throughout the land. [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 04] p. 64, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The evil made little headway until the generation was extinct which had made the covenant with God; but the parents had prepared the way for the apostasy of their children. God's commandments had been disregarded, his safeguards removed, his barriers broken down. [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 05] p. 64, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The correct and simple habits of the Hebrews had preserved them in physical health; but association with the heathen had led to the indulgence of appetite and sensual passions; and this had lessened physical strength, and enfeebled the mental and moral powers. God removed his protecting care and support, and the Israelites were no longer able to contend with their enemies. Soon they were brought into subjection to the very nations whom through God they might have subdued. [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 06] p. 64, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The Lord did not permit the sins of his people to pass without rebuke. There were still faithful worshipers in Israel; and many others, from habit and early association, attended the worship of God at the tabernacle. A large company were assembled upon the occasion of a religious feast, when an angel of God, having first appeared at Gilgal, revealed himself to the congregation at Shiloh. He addressed them in words of solemn reproof:-- [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 07] p. 64, Para. 4, [1881MS].

"I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars; but ye have not obeyed my voice. Why have ye done this? Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you." [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 08] p. 64, Para. 5, [1881MS].

This angel, the same that appeared to Joshua at the taking of Jericho,--was no less a personage than the Son of God. It was he who had brought Israel out of Egypt, and established them in the land of Canaan. He showed them that he had not broken his promises to them, but they themselves had violated their solemn covenant. [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 09] p. 64, Para. 6, [1881MS].

"And it came to pass, when the angel of the Lord spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice and wept." "And they sacrificed there unto the Lord." But their repentance produced no lasting results. The people mourned because their sins had brought suffering upon themselves; but did not sorrow that God was displeased, and his name dishonored. True repentance includes more than sorrow for sin. It demands a resolute turning away from evil. We may profess to feel deep sorrow for our sins, we may weep over our wrong course; but if we make no change in that course, our sorrow will avail nothing. [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 10] p. 65, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Before they entered the promised land, the Israelites had been faithfully taught their duty toward the heathen. They were to make no league with the inhabitants, but to utterly destroy their idols, and to cast down their altars. Now the Angel solemnly declares, "Ye have not obeyed my voice." And in sadness he asks, "Why have ye done this?" [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 11] p. 65, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The people could now see the sinfulness and ingratitude of their course. This was the golden opportunity for them to return to their allegiance to God, and to bring forth fruit meet for repentance. Had they manifested a willingness to act when duty was made known; had they entered at once upon the performance of the work that had been neglected, then the curse of God might have been turned away from Israel. But they returned to their evil ways, and the Lord left them to suffer the consequence of their own neglect. [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 12] p. 65, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The experience of the Israelites is that of many at the present day. Warnings and reproofs from God are continually given to his people. Godly sorrow, which produces repentance unto salvation, would lead them to make an immediate and decided change. But here many fail. Confessions are made, sorrow is expressed, tears are shed; but there is no permanent change of life. Unless the heart is renewed by divine grace, and earnest effort is made to resist temptation, we shall be overcome again and again. [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 13] p. 65, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Among God's preferred people, there are men in responsible positions who are content to remain in a state of coldness and backsliding. Their

piety vanishes at the approach of temptation. To gain the friendship of worldlings, they will risk the consequences of losing the favor of God. The Lord is trying his people as silver is tried. Closer and still closer will come the searching test, until the heart is wholly submitted to God, or hardened in disobedience and rebellion. God distinguishes between those who walk in the path of self-denial and obedience, which he has marked out, and that class who choose to follow their own ways. Too late we may see, as did the children of Israel, the folly of neglecting and disregarding God's commands. [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 14] p. 65, Para. 5, [1881MS].

As the Hebrews were warned not to assimilate to the heathen around them, so are we warned against conforming to the spirit and customs of the ungodly. Christ speaks to us in language that need not be misinterpreted: "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." "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Christ himself is the true pattern. His life of self-denial we are to imitate. His earnest labor for the salvation of souls we must copy. His purity and holiness must be reflected in us, or we shall never be permitted to sit with him in his throne. [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 15] p. 65, Para. 6, [1881MS].

It is not safe for Christians to choose the society of those who have no connection with God, and whose course is displeasing to him. Yet how many professed Christians venture upon the forbidden ground. Many invite to their homes relatives who are vain, trifling, and ungodly; and often the example and influence of these irreligious visitors produce lasting impressions upon the minds of the children in the household. The influence thus exerted is similar to that which resulted from the association of the Hebrews with the godless Canaanites. [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 16] p. 66, Para. 1, [1881MS].

God holds the parents accountable for disregarding his command to separate themselves and their families from these unholy influences. While we must live in the world, we are not to be of the world. We are forbidden to conform to its practices and fashions. The friendship of the ungodly is more dangerous than their enmity. It misleads and destroys thousands who might, by a proper and holy example, be led to become children of God. The minds of the young are thus made familiar with irreligion, vanity, ungodliness, pride, and immorality, and the heart not shielded by divine grace, gradually becomes corrupted. Almost imperceptibly, the youth learn to love the tainted atmosphere surrounding the ungodly. Evil angels gather about them, and they lose their relish for that which is pure, refined, and ennobling. [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 17] p. 66, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Professed Christian parents will pay the greatest deference to their worldly and irreligious guests, while these very persons are leading the children of those who pay them so much polite attention, away from sobriety and from religion. The youth may be trying to lead a religious life, but the parents have invited the tempter into their household, and he weaves his net about the children. Old and young become absorbed in questionable enjoyments, and the excitement of worldly pleasure. [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 18] p. 66, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Many feel that they must make some concessions to please their

irreligious relatives and friends. As it is not always easy to draw the line, one concession prepares the way for another, until those who were once true followers of Christ, are in life and character conformed to the customs of the world. The connection with God is broken. They are Christians in name only. When the test hour comes, then their hope is seen to be without foundation. They have sold themselves and their children to the enemy. They have dishonored God, and in the revelation of his righteous judgments, they will reap what they have sown. Christ will say to them, as he said to ancient Israel, "Ye have not obeyed my voice. Why have ye done this?" [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 19] p. 66, Para. 4, [1881MS].

How are parents neglecting their precious opportunities? It is their privilege to serve and honor God in their household. They should reject every form of idolatry and corruption. They should keep the atmosphere of the home pure and healthful, thus attracting holy angels to be their guests. They should educate and discipline their children to be Bible readers and Bible Christians. [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 20] p. 66, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Abraham's course in controlling his children and his household, and instructing them to fear and obey God, was approved of Heaven. Because he had been faithful to the trust already given, God committed to him greater responsibilities, making him the depository of divine truth for all the generations to come. He had honored God in his household, and God honored him before the world. It was declared that through his posterity, all the nations of the earth should be blessed. [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 21] p. 67, Para. 1, [1881MS].

God would do great things for his people at the present day, if they would but imitate Abraham's example of faithfulness and obedience. The Lord is waiting and longing to reveal to us the right arm of his power. He will work mightily for us, if we will but faithfully improve the opportunities and blessings already given. [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 22] p. 67, Para. 2, [1881MS].

"Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation," was the admonition of Christ to his disciples. We, too, have need of watchfulness and earnest prayer. We are surrounded by the perils of the last days. It is a time of special danger to the young. We should feel the most intense interest to secure the salvation of the children whom God has given us. When so much is at stake, how can we set up idols in our hearts? How can we be indolent and trifling, vain, proud, and careless? We have foes to fight within; we have victories to gain over our own sinful propensities. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, are seeking continually to weaken our spirituality. We must crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts. [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 23] p. 67, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Let us not yield to sloth, unbelief, and idolatry, as did the children of Israel. If the enemies of our souls are not driven out, they will increase in power, and will hold us in the slavery of sin. We can have no fellowship with the Lord's enemies, within or around us, without endangering our own souls, and the souls of those whom God has committed to our care. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 06-02-81 para. 24] p. 67, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Of the generation that arose after the death of Joshua, the Sacred Record states that "they knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim; and they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord to anger." [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 01] p. 67, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Notwithstanding their apostasy and great wickedness, the Lord did not utterly forsake his people. From time to time he raised up faithful and valiant men to deliver them from the oppression of their enemies. But the hearts of the people had become so corrupted by an evil course that it was not an easy task to restore purity of faith or of worship. When the deliverer was dead, and the people were released from his authority, they would return to their idolatry. [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 02] p. 67, Para. 6, [1881MS].

"They ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way. And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel; and he said, Because that this people hath transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not hearkened unto my voice; I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died." [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 03] p. 68, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The Lord sought to bring his people into a position where he could manifest his power in their behalf; but their hearts were set to depart from God, and they would not submit to his requirements. What blindness! what inexplicable folly! and equally incomprehensible is the course of those whom God has endowed with intellectual gifts and surrounded with temporal blessings, yet who will prefer worldly gain, and even the indulgence of debasing passions, to the favor of God and his infinite love. [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 04] p. 68, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Although the Israelites, as a nation, departed from God, yet there was ever a remnant who resolutely withstood the evil influences surrounding them, and maintained their allegiance to Jehovah. These were constantly growing in courage and true godliness. They clung to the Lord more firmly as they saw the apostasy of their brethren. Their faith grew stronger, with every conflict. [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 05] p. 68, Para. 3, [1881MS].

It is through the infinite mercy of God that his people at the present day are granted the high honor of being sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. But unless we give ourselves unreservedly to his service, and walk in obedience to his commandments, we can bring no proof that we are members of the royal family. Would that we could ever realize the love which God has manifested toward us fallen sinners, in giving his only Son for our salvation! We should never lose sight of the fact that those whom Christ redeems at such an infinite price are to be purified, that they may be unto him a peculiar people, zealous of good works. We should feel that Christ has placed upon us special honors in thus distinguishing us from the world, when he might have left us to perish in our sins. [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 06] p. 68, Para. 4, [1881MS].

God would have his people present a marked contrast, in character and conduct, to the unbelieving world. We are to be "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, to show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light." Only by constant watchfulness and earnest prayer, mingled with faith, can we preserve our peculiar, holy character as sons and daughters of God. [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 07] p. 68, Para. 5, [1881MS].

It is far more easy to profess and resolve than to perform. Like ancient Israel, many covenant to cleave unto the Lord, and serve him, and then soon forget their vows, and join with the ungodly in the pursuits of worldly gain or pleasure. We should be jealous of ourselves, lest we depart from God. "For if they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from Heaven?" The blessings and privileges which we enjoy place us under the most solemn obligation to improve these gifts to the glory of our Creator. They should inspire in our hearts love to God, and an earnest determination to obey his requirements. Let us not become self-confident or presumptuous, but rather fear lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of us should seem to come short of it. [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 08] p. 68, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The cause of Israel's weakness lay in their departure from God by disobedience to his commandments. The reason of the weakness and backsliding of modern Israel is their neglect to obey the divine law. God requires from all mankind obedience to his commandments. The whole world will be judged by the moral law according to their opportunity of becoming acquainted with it, whether by reason, or tradition, or the written word. [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 09] p. 69, Para. 1, [1881MS].

God's law is spiritual. It takes cognizance of our most secret thoughts, purposes, and motives. The judgment, the will, and the affections must be controlled by its precepts. Its principles require love to God and to man; without this love, external compliance will not be accepted. This law is the standard of Christian character. Like a faithful mirror, it reveals to the children of men the defects in their moral character. It makes them watchful against temptation. It teaches them to be exact in judgment, and correct in spiritual discernment. The law of God is holy, just, and good. When our lives conform to this standard we are happy. [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 10] p. 69, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The Lord was constantly seeking to impress upon ancient Israel their duty to obey his law; and those words of warning and reproof apply with as much greater force to this generation as our light and privileges are greater than were those of Israel. We have seen how the disregard of God's requirements brought trouble upon his ancient people, and finally resulted in their entire separation from him. Their sad history should be a lesson to us that nothing should be permitted to rival God in our affections. He alone can give rest, and peace, and happiness to the soul. God alone is entitled to our supreme love, to our entire confidence. He should be the object of our gratitude and adoration, our reverence and unquestioning submission. If we fail to love him with all the heart, we rob him of the service which is his due. [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 11] p. 69, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Through his pride and ambition, Satan became the enemy of God and man. Though he forfeited his position in Heaven, he has succeeded in his presumptuous efforts to become the god of this world. Satan used the Canaanites as his instruments to allure Israel from God, and lead them to give honor to himself. It was to secure their own safety and happiness that the Lord commanded his people to extirpate those wicked nations. [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 12] p. 69, Para. 4, [1881MS].

In their prosperity, Israel forgot God, as they had been warned that they would do. But reverses came. The Hebrews were subdued by the king of Mesopotamia, and held in severe bondage for eight years. In their distress, they found that their idolatrous connections could not help them. Then they remembered the wonderful works of God, and began to cry unto him, and the Lord raised up a deliverer for them, Othniel, Caleb's younger brother. The spirit of the Lord rested upon him, and he judged Israel, and went out to war, and the Lord delivered the king of Mesopotamia into his hand. [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 13] p. 69, Para. 5, [1881MS].

When Othniel was designated as the man whom God had chosen to lead and deliver Israel, he did not refuse to take the responsibility. In the strength of God he at once commenced to repress idolatry as the Lord had commanded, to administer justice, and to elevate the standard of morality and religion. As Israel repented of their sins, the Lord manifested his great mercy toward them, and wrought for their deliverance. [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 14] p. 70, Para. 1, [1881MS].

For forty years Othniel ruled in Israel. During this time the people remained faithful to the divine law, and consequently enjoyed peace and prosperity. But when his judicious and salutary control ceased with his death, the Israelites again relapsed into idolatry. And thus the story of backsliding and chastisement, of confession and deliverance, was repeated again and again. [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 15] p. 70, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Had Israel been true to God, their example of faithfulness would have been followed by their children; but the sins of after generations testified to the indolence, and slothfulness, and neglect of the parents. A solemn responsibility still rests upon parents in the education of their children, to mould their characters after the pattern which God has approved, and not after the pattern of the world. Christian parents should teach their children the solemn and momentous truths of God's word, especially those truths which particularly relate to the present time. Faithful, earnest, and frequent prayer should be offered that these children may be fitted for any position of trust to which God shall call them, in society, or in the church. They should be taught to love righteousness and to hate evil. [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 16] p. 70, Para. 3, [1881MS].

One family educated according to the Bible rule may exert an influence directly upon thousands, and through them upon others, until multitudes shall be brought to fear and honor God, and a glorious company of white-robed ones shall stand round about the throne,--a precious harvest from the seed sown by those faithful parents. But Satan is determined that this mighty influence for God and Heaven shall not be exerted in the home circle. He will deceive the parents if possible. He will make them careless, inattentive, indolent, in the service of God.

He will make them negligent in training their children according to the Bible standard, negligent in conforming their own lives to the life of Christ; for Satan knows that in most cases he can thus secure the parents and children also, and through them can ruin many souls. [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 17] p. 70, Para. 4, [1881MS].

As the Israelites were prone to idolatry, so are the people of the present age. The same adversary that succeeded in leading them astray, is now at work with tenfold power to entice God's professed people from their simplicity, their sincerity, their earnestness and piety. His devices are all too successful. Worldly things are allowed to attract the attention and absorb the interest. Professed Christians unite with the ungodly, and Christ ceases to be a welcome guest. [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 18] p. 70, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The only safety for God's people is to put away the impious ambition to make a league with the world, to imitate her customs and practices. They must seek a closer connection with God, and give diligent heed to his word in counsels, reproofs, and promises. [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 19] p. 70, Para. 6, [1881MS].

By their family government, parents are laying the very foundation of the child's character. God has committed to parents a solemn and responsible work. The mother of Moses trained her child for God. So patiently and perseveringly did she plant religious principles in his soul, that although afterward surrounded with great temptations, he was not corrupted. A prospective crown could not entice him from his allegiance to God. What our children may become we cannot tell; the future we cannot read; but God has appointed our work, and bidden us perform it with both worlds in view, that our children may be a blessing to the church and to the world here, and may shine forever in the courts of the Lord hereafter. [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 20] p. 71, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Our earthly life, however long, honored, or useful it may be, is but childhood, frail, imperfect, and undeveloped. Manhood, with its full, perfect, glorious development, will come, when, freed from the taint of sin, we stand among the redeemed throng. Then we shall enjoy a life which measures with the life of God, and through everlasting ages we shall go on increasing in wisdom and knowledge. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 06-09-81 para. 21] p. 71, Para. 2, [1881MS].

In the northern part of the land of Canaan, near Lake Merom, lay the possessions of Jabin, king of Hazor, and one of the most powerful and formidable of the enemies of Israel. In the days of Joshua, this monarch united with other kings against Israel, but was utterly defeated and his city was burned. [Cf: ST 06-16-81 para. 01] p. 71, Para. 3, [1881MS].

After some years, however, the Canaanites recovered from their defeat, and rebuilt the city. A new king, Jabin, reigning like his predecessor in Hazor, rose into great power. The commander of his armies, Sisera, was an able and successful general. His forces were well equipped and powerful, including nine hundred chariots of iron. [Cf: ST 06-16-81 para. 02] p. 71, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The Israelites, having again separated themselves from God by

idolatry, were grievously oppressed by these enemies. The property and even the lives of the people were in constant danger. Hence the villages and lonely dwellings were deserted, and the people congregated in the walled cities. The high roads were unoccupied, and the people went from place to place by unfrequented byways. At the places for drawing water, many were robbed and even murdered, and to add to their distress, the Israelites were unarmed. Among forty thousand men, not a sword or a spear could be found. [Cf: ST 06-16-81 para. 03] p. 71, Para. 5, [1881MS].

For twenty years, the Israelites groaned under the yoke of the oppressor; then they turned from their idolatry, and with humiliation and repentance cried unto the Lord for deliverance. They did not cry in vain. There was dwelling in Israel, a woman illustrious for her piety, and through her the Lord chose to deliver his people. Her name was Deborah. She was known as a prophetess, and in the absence of the usual magistrates, the people had sought to her for counsel and justice. [Cf: ST 06-16-81 para. 04] p. 71, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The Lord communicated to Deborah his purpose to destroy the enemies of Israel, and bade her send for a man named Barak, of the tribe of Naphtali, and make known to him the instructions which she had received. She accordingly sent for Barak, and directed him to assemble ten thousand men of the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun, and make war upon the armies of King Jabin. [Cf: ST 06-16-81 para. 05] p. 71, Para. 7, [1881MS].

Barak knew the scattered, disheartened, and unarmed condition of the Hebrews, and the strength and skill of their enemies. Although he had been designated by the Lord himself as the one chosen to deliver Israel, and had received the assurance that God would go with him and subdue their enemies, yet he was timid and distrustful. He accepted the message from Deborah as the word of God, but he had little confidence in Israel, and feared that they would not obey his call. He refused to engage in such a doubtful undertaking unless Deborah would accompany him, and thus support his efforts by her influence and counsel. Deborah consented, but assured him that because of his lack of faith, the victory gained should not bring honor to him; for Sisera would be betrayed into the hands of a woman. [Cf: ST 06-16-81 para. 06] p. 72, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Barak now marshaled an army of ten thousand men, and marched to Mount Tabor, as the Lord had directed. Sisera immediately assembled an immense and well-equipped force, expecting to surround the Hebrews and make them an easy prey. The Israelites were but poorly prepared for an encounter, and looked with terror upon the vast armies spread out in the plain beneath them, equipped with all the implements of warfare, and provided with the dreaded chariots of iron. These were so constructed as to be terribly destructive. Large, scythe-like knives were fastened to the axles, so that the chariots, being driven through the ranks of the enemy, would cut them down like wheat before the sickle. [Cf: ST 06-16-81 para. 07] p. 72, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The Israelites had established themselves in a strong position in the mountains, to await a favorable opportunity for an attack. Encouraged by Deborah's assurance that the very day had come for signal victory, Barak led his army down into the open plain, and boldly made a charge

upon the enemy. The God of battle fought for Israel, and neither skill in warfare, nor superiority of numbers and equipment, could withstand them. The hosts of Sisera were panic-stricken; in their terror they sought only how they might escape. Vast numbers were slain, and the strength of the invading army was utterly destroyed. The Israelites acted with courage and promptness; but God alone could have discomfited the enemy, and the victory could be ascribed to him alone. [Cf: ST 06-16-81 para. 08] p. 72, Para. 3, [1881MS].

When Sisera saw that his army was defeated, he left his chariot, and endeavored to make his escape on foot, as a common soldier. Approaching the tent of Heber, one of the descendants of Jethro, the fugitive was invited to find shelter there. In the absence of Heber, Jael, his wife, courteously offered Sisera a refreshing draught, and opportunity for repose, and the weary general soon fell asleep. [Cf: ST 06-16-81 para. 09] p. 72, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Jael was at first ignorant of the character of her guest, and she resolved to conceal him; but when she afterward learned that he was Sisera, the enemy of God and of his people, her purpose changed. As he lay before her asleep, she overcame her natural reluctance to such an act, and slew him by driving a nail through his temples, pinning him to the earth. As Barak, in pursuit of his enemy, passed that way, he was called in by Jael to behold the vain-glorious captain dead at his feet,--slain by the hand of a woman. [Cf: ST 06-16-81 para. 10] p. 72, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Deborah celebrated the triumph of Israel in a most sublime and impassioned song. She ascribed to God all the glory of their deliverance, and bade the people praise him for his wonderful works. She called upon the kings and princes of surrounding nations to hear what God had wrought for Israel, and to take warning not to do them harm. She showed that honor and power belong to God, and not to men, or to their idols. She portrayed the awful exhibitions of divine power and majesty displayed at Sinai. She set before Israel their helpless and distressed condition, under the oppression of their enemies, and related in glowing language the history of their deliverance. [Cf: ST 06-16-81 para. 11] p. 73, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The destruction of Sisera and his forces, effectually subdued the Canaanites. After this, the land had peace forty years. But prosperity did not bring Israel nearer to God. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 06-16-81 para. 12] p. 73, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Alas, that in the history of God's chosen people the sorrowful story of apostasy and its punishment must be so oft repeated! Forty years of peace elapsed after the destruction of Sisera and his host, and again "the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years." Heretofore the hand of the oppressor had fallen but lightly on the tribes dwelling east of the Jordan, but in the present calamities they were the chief sufferers. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 01] p. 73, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The Midianites and Amalekites, who dwelt on the eastern borders of the land and in the deserts beyond, were still the bitter and unrelenting enemies of Israel. These nations had been well-nigh destroyed by the Israelites in the days of Moses, but they had since increased greatly,

and had now become a numerous and powerful people. They had thirsted for revenge, and now the opportunity had come. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 02] p. 73, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Because of their sins, the protecting hand of God was withdrawn from Israel, and they were left to the mercies of their enemies. The wild, fierce inhabitants of the desert, "as grasshoppers for a multitude," came swarming into the land, with their flocks and herds, and pitched their tents in plain and valley. They came as soon as the harvests began to ripen, and remained until the last fruits of the earth had been gathered. They stripped the fields of their increase, and robbed and maltreated the inhabitants, and then returned to the deserts. Thus the Israelites had been forced to abandon the open country, and to congregate in the walled towns; and many had even found shelter in caves among the mountains. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 03] p. 73, Para. 5, [1881MS].

For seven years this oppression continued, and then in their distress the people remembered Him who had so often delivered them; and they cried unto the Lord for help. But while they were very desirous to be relieved from their oppressors, they did not exercise true repentance for their sins. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 04] p. 73, Para. 6, [1881MS].

God could not help them in their state of impiety. But through his prophet he addressed them in words of warning and reproof, and the message was publicly proclaimed from city to city throughout the land. "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage. And I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you, and drave them out from before you, and gave you their land. And I said unto you, I am the Lord your God; fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell. But ye have not obeyed my voice." [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 05] p. 74, Para. 1, [1881MS].

We might expect the Israelites to harden their hearts against the reproofs of the prophet. We listen to hear them respond, "We do not wish to be continually reminded of our sins. Speak to us words of peace, encouragement, and hope, but do not keep ever before us the dismal relation of our backslidings." How often do the professed people of God at the present day turn away from instruction, and neglect oft-repeated warnings. They dislike to be reminded of their defects of character. They are unwilling to be reproofed for their pride and idolatry in turning from the requirements of God to seek the gains, friendship, or pleasures of the world. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 06] p. 74, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Such was the manner in which some of the Israelites received the message of reproof. Had the people been enjoying prosperity, this feeling of rebellion would, no doubt, have been general; but in their distress from the oppression of their enemies, with want and even starvation staring them in the face, they felt their need of help from God. They knew that unless he whom they had so dishonored should manifest his power for their deliverance, they must perish. In deep humility they accepted the message of reproof, confessed their sins, and implored the mercy of the Most High. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 07] p. 74, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Their prayers were heard, and again the Lord sent forth the man of his choice to act as deliverer for Israel. The one thus selected was Gideon, of the tribe of Manasseh. The Midianites had swept like a devouring plague over the land. It was only with the greatest difficulty that the Hebrews could secrete sufficient food to save them from actual starvation. Gideon had, however, retained possession of a small quantity of wheat, and fearing to beat it out in the threshing floor, he had taken it to the vineyard, near the winepress. The time of ripe grapes being far off, the attention of the Midianites would not be directed to that place. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 08] p. 74, Para. 4, [1881MS].

As he thus labored in secrecy and silence, he sadly meditated upon the condition of Israel. He thought of her glorious triumphs in the past, of her present abject condition, and of the still darker prospect for the future, and his spirit was stirred within him. With deep earnestness he considered how the oppressor's yoke might be broken from off his people. To all appearance this was impossible. The Israelites were disheartened and discouraged. They had dishonored God by their idolatry, and they felt little confidence that he would work for them. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 09] p. 74, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Gideon almost despaired of inspiring the people with faith or courage, but he knew that the Lord would work mightily for Israel as he had done in the past. His whole soul cried out after God. He felt that although he might stand alone, yet if he had the assurance that God was with him, he would not fear to strike a blow against the oppressors. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 10] p. 74, Para. 6, [1881MS].

While Gideon's mind was absorbed in meditations like these, suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared to him and addressed him with the words, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor." [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 11] p. 75, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The melancholy nature of Gideon's thoughts is revealed by his answer, "O my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites." [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 12] p. 75, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The messenger of Heaven replied, "Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have not I sent thee?" [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 13] p. 75, Para. 3, [1881MS].

With a sense of his own unfitness for so important a work, Gideon exclaimed, "O my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 14] p. 75, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Then the angel gave him the gracious assurance, "Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man." [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 15] p. 75, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Gideon desired some token that the one now addressing him was the same that spoke to Moses in the burning bush. The angel had veiled the divine glory of his presence, but it was no other than Christ, the Son

of God. When a prophet or an angel delivered a divine message, his words were, "The Lord saith, I will do this," but it is stated of the Person who talked with Gideon, "The Lord said unto him, I will be with thee." [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 16] p. 75, Para. 6, [1881MS].

Desiring to show special honor to his illustrious visitor, and having obtained the assurance that the Angel would tarry, Gideon hastened to his tent, and out of his scanty store prepared a kid and unleavened cakes, which he brought forth to set before him. Gideon was poor, yet he was ready to use hospitality without grudging. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 17] p. 75, Para. 7, [1881MS].

As the gift was presented, the Angel said, "Take the flesh and unleavened cakes, and lay them on this rock, and pour out the broth." Gideon did so, and then the Lord gave him the sign which he desired. With the staff in his hand, the Angel touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and a fire rose up out of the rock and consumed the whole as a sacrifice, and not as a hospitable meal; for he was God, and not man. After this token of his divine character, the Angel disappeared. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 18] p. 75, Para. 8, [1881MS].

When convinced that he had looked upon the Son of God, Gideon was filled with fear, and exclaimed, "Alas, O Lord God! for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face." [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 19] p. 75, Para. 9, [1881MS].

Then the Lord graciously appeared to Gideon a second time and said, "Peace be unto thee, fear not, thou shalt not die." These gracious words were spoken by the same compassionate Saviour who said to the tempted disciples upon the stormy sea, "It is I; be not afraid,"--he who appeared to those sorrowing ones in the upper chamber, and spoke the selfsame words addressed to Gideon, "Peace be unto you." The very same Jesus who walked in humiliation as a man among the children of men, came to his ancient people, to council and direct, to command, to encourage, and reprove them. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 20] p. 76, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The family to which Gideon belonged was grievously infected with idolatry. His father erected at Ophrah, where he dwelt, a large altar to Baal, at which the people of the towns worshiped. Gideon was commanded to destroy this altar, to cut down the groves that surrounded it, and in its stead to erect an altar to Jehovah, over the rock on which the offering had been consumed, and then to offer a sacrifice unto the Lord. Gideon faithfully carried out these directions, performing the work by night, lest he should be compelled to desist if he attempted it by day. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 21] p. 76, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The deliverer of Israel must declare war upon idolatry before he went to battle with the enemies of his people. He must esteem the honor of God above the credit of his father, and regard the divine commands as more obligatory than parental authority. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 22] p. 76, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The offering of sacrifice unto the Lord had been committed to the priests and Levites, and had been restricted to the altar at Shiloh; but He who had established the Jewish economy, and to whom all its

services pointed, had power to change its requirements. In this instance he saw fit to depart from the ritual appointment. It was of great importance that the deliverance of Israel should be preceded by a solemn protest against the worship of Baal, and an acknowledgment of Jehovah as the only true and living God. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 23] p. 76, Para. 4, [1881MS].

When the men of the city, early in the morning, came to pay their devotions to Baal, they were greatly surprised and enraged at what had taken place. Soon it was known that Gideon had done this, and then nothing but his blood could satisfy those deluded idolaters. They at once began to put forth efforts to take his life. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 24] p. 76, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Gideon had told his father, Joash, of the Angel's visit, and the promise that Israel should be delivered. He also related to him the divine command to destroy the altar of Baal. the Spirit of God moved upon the heart of Joash. He saw that the gods whom he had worshiped had no power even to save themselves from utter destruction and hence they could not protect their worshipers. When the idolatrous multitude clamored for the death of Gideon, Joash fearlessly stood in his defense, and endeavored to show the people how powerless and unworthy of trust or adoration were their gods: "Will ye plead for Baal? will ye save him? he that will plead for him, let him be put to death whilst it is yet morning; if he be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar." [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 25] p. 76, Para. 6, [1881MS].

He reminded them that the penalty of death would justly rest upon themselves instead of Gideon, for they had broken the law of God against idolatry. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 26] p. 76, Para. 7, [1881MS].

The whole transaction, with the stirring appeals of Gideon, produced a powerful effect upon the people of Ophrah. All thoughts of violence were dismissed; and when, moved by the Spirit of the Lord. Gideon sounded the trumpet of war, they were among the first to gather to him. He then sent messengers throughout his own tribe of Manasseh, and also to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and all cheerfully obeyed the call. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 27] p. 77, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Gideon deeply felt his own insufficiency for the great work before him. He dared not place himself at the head of the army without positive evidence that God had called him to this work, and that he would be with him. He prayed, "If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said, behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor, and if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou has said." [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 28] p. 77, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The Lord granted the prayer of his servant. In the morning the fleece was wet, while the ground was dry. But now unbelief suggested that wool naturally absorbs moisture when there is any in the air, and that the test was not decisive. Hence, he asked a renewal of the sign, humbly pleading that unbelief might not move the Lord to anger. His request was granted. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 29] p. 77, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The Lord does not always choose for his work men of the greatest

talents, but he selects those whom he can best use. Individuals who might do good service for God, may for a time be left in obscurity, apparently unnoticed and unemployed by their Master. But if they faithfully perform the duties of their humble position, cherishing a willingness to labor and to sacrifice for him, he will in his own time intrust them with greater responsibilities. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 30] p. 77, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Before honor is humility. The Lord can use most effectually those who are most sensible of their own unworthiness and inefficiency. He will teach them to exercise the courage of faith. He will make them strong by uniting their weakness to his might, wise by connecting their ignorance with his wisdom. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 31] p. 77, Para. 5, [1881MS].

God will accept the services of all who will work in obedience to his will, who will not for any consideration bring a stain upon the conscience, who will not permit any influence to lead them from the path of duty. If we choose, we may make the record of our lives such as we shall not be ashamed to own when the secrets of all hearts shall stand revealed, and every man's work shall be weighed in the balances of truth. The Lord employs men as his co-laborers, but let none imagine that they are essential to the work of God, that they cannot be dispensed with. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 32] p. 77, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The teachable and trusting ones, having a right purpose and a pure heart, need not wait for great occasions or for extraordinary abilities before they employ their powers. They should not stand irresolute, questioning, and fearing what the world will say or think of them. We are not to weary ourselves with anxious care, but to go on, quietly performing with faithfulness the work which God assigns us, and leaving the result wholly with him. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 33] p. 77, Para. 7, [1881MS].

If they but preserve their sincerity, their meekness, and humility, the poorest, weakest, and humblest of Christ's followers, working in love, may start waves of blessing that shall go on widening and deepening, to refresh and bless the world. In order that they may do this, Christ must shine forth in their character. Let the daily life be a reflection of the life of Christ, and the testimony thus borne to the world will have a powerful influence. Heaven alone will reveal the fruits of an unselfish, holy life. The great contest of truth against error must be carried forward by men who kindle their taper at the divine altar. Evil may seem for a time to prevail, but in the end righteousness will gain the victory. Every righteous act will be recorded in the book of life, and will be remembered and rewarded of God. Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 06-23-81 para. 34] p. 78, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Gideon's courage was greatly strengthened by the tokens of divine favor vouchsafed to him. Without delay, he went out with his forces to give battle to the Midianites. But now another severe trial of faith awaited him. With the immense host of invaders spread out before him--the thirty-two thousand of the Hebrews seeming, in contrast, like a mere handful--the word of the Lord came to him: "The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath

saved me. Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from Mount Gilead." [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 01] p. 78, Para. 2, [1881MS].

It had been made a law in Israel that before they went to battle, the following proclamation should be sounded throughout the army: "What man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it. And what man is he that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not yet eaten of it? let him also go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man eat of it. And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take her. And the officers shall speak further unto the people, and they shall say, What man is there that is fearful and fainthearted? let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart." What a striking illustration is this of the tender, pitying love of Christ! He who instituted the relations of life and the ties of kindred, made special provision that these be not too widely broken. He would have none go forth to battle unwillingly. This proclamation also sets forth in a forcible manner the influence which may be exerted by one man who is deficient in faith and courage, and further shows the effect of our thoughts and feelings upon our own course of action. [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 02] p. 78, Para. 3, [1881MS].

"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." The thoughts and feelings cherished give direction to the conduct, and thus determine the character. A strong, well-balanced character is built up by faithfulness in all the smaller as well as the greater acts of life. A man is measured, not by the power put forth in some one great effort, but by the zeal and integrity which he brings to the daily round of cares and responsibilities. [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 03] p. 78, Para. 4, [1881MS].

True Christian character is marked by a singleness of purpose, an indomitable determination, which refuses to yield to worldly influences, which will aim at nothing short of the Bible standard. If men will permit themselves to become discouraged in the service of God, the great adversary will present abundant reasons to turn them from the plain path of duty to one of ease and irresponsibility. Those who can be bribed or seduced, discouraged or terrified, will be of no service in the Christian warfare. Those who set their affections on worldly treasures or worldly honors, will not push the battle against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places. [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 04] p. 79, Para. 1, [1881MS].

All who would be soldiers of the cross of Christ, must gird on the armor and prepare for conflict. They should not be intimidated by threats; or terrified by dangers. They must be cautious in peril, yet firm and brave in facing the foe and doing battle for God. The consecration of Christ's follower must be complete. Father, mother, wife, children, houses, lands, everything, must be held secondary to the work and cause of God. He must be willing to bear patiently, cheerfully, joyfully, whatever in God's providence he may be called to suffer. His final reward will be to share with Christ the throne of immortal glory. [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 05] p. 79, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Because of the weak condition of the armies of Israel, in contrast with the numbers of the enemy, Gideon had refrained from making the usual proclamation. He was filled with astonishment at the declaration that his force was too large. But the Lord saw the pride and unbelief existing in the hearts of His people. Aroused by the stirring appeals of Gideon, they had readily enlisted; but when they saw the multitudes of the Midianites, their courage failed. Yet, had Israel triumphed, those very men would have ascribed the victory to their own skill and valor, rather than to the mercy and power of Jehovah. As a people, they had little faith in God. Many were suffering the reproaches of a guilty conscience. [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 06] p. 79, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Instead of being too many, the Israelites felt that their numbers were too few; but Gideon made the proclamation as the Lord had directed. With sinking heart he saw twenty-two thousand, or more than two-thirds of his entire force, depart for their homes. [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 07] p. 79, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Again the word of the Lord came to his servant: "The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there; and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go." [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 08] p. 79, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The people were led down to the waterside, expecting to make an immediate attack upon the enemy. A few hastily took a little water in the hand and sucked it up as they went on, but nearly all bowed upon their knees, and leisurely drank from the surface of the water. Those who took of the water in their hands, were but three hundred out of the ten thousand; yet these were selected, and the great body of the army were permitted to return to their homes. [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 09] p. 79, Para. 6, [1881MS].

Here we see the simple means by which character is often tested. Those who in a time of great peril were intent upon supplying their own wants, were not the men to be trusted in an emergency. The men of God's choice were the few who would not permit their own wants to hinder them in the discharge of duty. Not only did they possess courage and self-control, but they were men of faith. They had not defiled themselves by idolatry. God could direct them, and through them he could work deliverance for Israel. The Lord designed to show his people that he was their source of strength. By the simplicity of the means employed, he designed to rebuke their pride and self-exaltation. [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 10] p. 80, Para. 1, [1881MS].

As with ancient Israel, so it is with the people of God at this age of the world. The Lord can do but little for the children of men, because they are so ready to esteem themselves wiser than their Creator. If blessed with a measure of success, many become elated and self-confident, and forget their dependence upon God. There is too much reliance upon human plans and methods, and too little faith in the mighty God of Jacob; too much machinery, and too little of the lifegiving Spirit and power of the Most High. [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 11] p. 80, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Christ is the light of the world. All wisdom and all knowledge flow from Him who is the fountain of wisdom. He bids his followers, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." It is when reflected in his disciples, that the divine loveliness of Christ is revealed to the world. Those who depart from the simplicity of the gospel, have gone on in advance of their Leader; but Christ says, "Follow me." [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 12] p. 80, Para. 3, [1881MS].

All who indulge pride and self-importance, "vaunting themselves against God," he will separate from his work; and, in their stead, will choose those who will walk in the path of humility and obedience, acknowledging that all their success comes from God. [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 13] p. 80, Para. 4, [1881MS].

All the wonders which God has wrought for his people, have been performed by the most simple means. When the people of God are wholly consecrated to him, then he will employ them to carry forward his work on the earth. But we should remember that whatever success may attend us, the glory and honor belongs to God; for every faculty and every power is a gift from him. [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 14] p. 80, Para. 5, [1881MS].

God will test, to the utmost, the faith and courage of those to whom he has intrusted responsibilities in his work. Appearances will often be forbidding. Although God has given repeated assurance of his help, yet faith will almost stagger. "Thus saith the Lord," must be our firm reliance, independent of human reasonings, or apparent impossibilities. [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 15] p. 80, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The experience of Gideon and his army, was designed to teach a lesson of simplicity and faith. The leader whom God had chosen occupied no prominent position in Israel. He was not a ruler, a Levite, or a priest. He thought himself the least in his father's house. Human wisdom would not have selected him; but God saw in Gideon a man of integrity and moral courage. He was distrustful of self, and willing to listen to the teachings of God, and carry out his purposes. The Lord is not dependent upon men of high position, of great intellect, or extensive knowledge. Such men are frequently proud and self-sufficient. They feel themselves competent to devise and execute plans without counsel from God. They separate themselves from the true Vine, and hence become dry and fruitless, as withered branches. [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 16] p. 81, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The Lord would put to shame the vaunting of men. He will give success to the feeblest efforts, the most unpromising methods, when divinely appointed, and entered upon with humility and trust. God will not test our faith beyond endurance. He will give us sufficient evidence, that we may, in our weakness, lean upon the arm of his strength, and trust wholly in his power. Talents, education, and influence, may, under the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, be employed in the service of God; but Satan is more often served by them, than is Jesus Christ. [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 17] p. 81, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The Majesty of Heaven walked among the children of men with the dignity of a king; yet he preserved the simplicity of a little child. He was never known to boast of superiority, to exalt his own power,

ability, or attainments. Christ was the Creator of the earth; he was the king of glory; yet his life of meekness and humility put to shame the proud boasting of men. He was the embodiment of wisdom, the fountain of knowledge. Let those who would pride themselves upon their superior abilities, learn of the great Teacher. Jesus invites all, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." He said to his disciples, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven." [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 18] p. 81, Para. 3, [1881MS].

How does God look upon men who cherish pride, and boast of their superiority, when they are dependent upon him for every breath they draw, for the food they eat, the clothing they wear, and, above all these, for the precious gift of reason,--the power of thought? Let the hand of God be laid upon man, let the mind be clouded, and what then would he have whereof to boast? [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 19] p. 81, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Success does not depend upon strength or numbers. God can deliver by few as well as by many. A large church is not necessarily a strong church. Some of its members may be cherishing selfishness, pride, or unbelief; some may be dishonest, others corrupt in heart and life. All these are a source of weakness to the church. They bring the frown of God upon his people, and the great adversary will work through them to advance his own cause. [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 20] p. 81, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Anciently, those whose worldly interests would draw their hearts from the work of God, were bidden to return to their homes. It were better for the cause of truth today, if those whose attention is absorbed with their own private interests, would separate from the work of God, and give themselves to the things in which their hearts delight. Then they would not, by their wrong example, exert so dangerous an influence upon others. [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 21] p. 81, Para. 6, [1881MS].

God is honored, not so much by the great number, as by the character of those who serve him. He appreciates moral worth. He draws the dividing line between those who bear his name by profession, and those whose character shows them to be his children. Those who have the fear of God will listen to his counsels, and obey them. They will not be content with spurious theories, nor build upon false principles to secure the friendship of the world. Yet, at the same time, they will cherish and exemplify those virtues that promote the happiness of the family, the church, and the community. [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 22] p. 82, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Many who occupy responsible positions in the church of God, are sacrificing their integrity to secure the favor of the ungodly. A strong current is sweeping downward, and they decide that it is easier to float with the tide than to row against it. Like the children of Israel, they sacrifice the blessings of God by their indolence and spiritual sloth. Many set up idols in their hearts,--idols of selfishness, idols of pride, and love of display. Eternal things lose their value. Withdraw the influences which God has provided to preserve and strengthen our spirituality, and it decays and dies. We must be continually seeking to draw near to God, and to learn his will. We must become more unlike the world, and more like Christ in character. By

Mrs. E.G. White. [Cf: ST 06-30-81 para. 23] p. 82, Para. 2, [1881MS].

When Gideon stood at the head of thirty thousand men to make war against the Midianites, he felt that unless God should work for Israel, their cause would be hopeless. At the divine command the Hebrew force had been reduced by successive tests, until there remained with him, only three hundred men to oppose that countless multitude. What wonder that his heart sunk within him as he thought of the conflict of the morrow. [Cf: ST 07-14-81 para. 01] p. 82, Para. 3, [1881MS].

But the Lord did not leave his faithful servant to despair. He spoke to Gideon in the night season, and bade him, with Phurah, his trusty attendant, go down to the camp of the Midianites, intimating that he would there hear matter for his encouragement. He went, and waiting there in darkness and silence, he heard one soldier, just awakened, relate a dream to his companion: "Lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it that the tent lay along. [Cf: ST 07-14-81 para. 02] p. 82, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The other answered in words that stirred the heart of that unseen listener, "This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel; for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host." [Cf: ST 07-14-81 para. 03] p. 82, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Gideon recognized the voice of God speaking to him through the words of these Midianitish strangers. His faith and courage were greatly strengthened, and he rejoiced that Israel's God could work through the humblest means to abase the pride of men. With confidence and hope, he returned to the few men under his command, saying, "Arise, for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian." [Cf: ST 07-14-81 para. 04] p. 82, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The apparently powerless condition of that little company of Israelites, compared with the vast host of the enemy, was fitly represented by the cake of barley bread. But as that loaf overthrew the tent upon which it fell, so would the handful of Israelites destroy their numerous and powerful enemies. The Lord himself directed Gideon's mind in the adoption of a plan which the latter immediately set out to execute. He divided his three hundred men into three companies. To every man was given a trumpet, and a pitcher containing a lighted lamp. He then stationed his men in such a manner that they surrounded the entire camp of Midian. They had been previously instructed how to proceed, and at midnight, at a signal from Gideon, all the three companies blew their trumpets, uncovered their lamps, and broke the pitchers, at the same time shouting, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!" The light of three hundred lamps, piercing the midnight darkness, and that mighty shout from three hundred voices, suddenly aroused the sleeping army. Believing themselves at the mercy of an overwhelming force, the Midianites were panic-stricken. A terrible scene of confusion ensued. In their fright they fled in all directions, and mistaking their own companions for enemies they slew one another. [Cf: ST 07-14-81 para. 05] p. 83, Para. 1, [1881MS].

As the news of Israel's victory spread, many who had been sent to their homes returned, and joined in the pursuit of their fleeing

enemies. Gideon also sent messengers to the Ephraimites, requesting them to seize the fords of the Jordan that the fugitives might not escape eastward. [Cf: ST 07-14-81 para. 06] p. 83, Para. 2, [1881MS].

In this terrible overthrow, not less than one hundred and twenty thousand of the invaders were slain, and so completely were the Midianites subdued that they were never again able to make war upon Israel. A remnant of fifteen thousand who managed to escape across the river, were pursued by Gideon and his faithful three hundred, and utterly defeated, and Zebah and Zalmunna, two Midianite princes, were slain. [Cf: ST 07-14-81 para. 07] p. 83, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Nothing can happen in any part of the universe without the knowledge of Him who is omnipresent. Not a single event of human life is unknown to our Maker. While Satan is constantly devising evil, the Lord our God overrules all, so that it will not harm his obedient, trusting children. The same power that controls the boisterous waves of the ocean can hold in check all the power of rebellion and of crime. God says to one as to the other, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther." [Cf: ST 07-14-81 para. 08] p. 83, Para. 4, [1881MS].

What lessons of humility and faith may we not learn as we trace the dealings of God with his creatures. The Lord can do but little for the children of men, because they are so full of pride and vain glory. They exalt self, magnifying their own strength, learning, and wisdom. It is necessary for God to disappoint their hopes and frustrate their plans, that they may learn to trust in him alone. All our powers are from God; we can do nothing independent of the strength which he has given us. Where is the man or woman or child that God does not sustain? Where is the desolate place which God does not fill? Where is the want that any but God can supply? [Cf: ST 07-14-81 para. 09] p. 83, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The psalmist represents the presence of the Infinite One as pervading the universe. "If I ascend up into Heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." We can never find a solitude where God is not. The ever watchful eye of Omniscience is upon all our works, and although he can marshal the armies of Heaven to do his will, he condescends to accept the services of frail, erring mortals. [Cf: ST 07-14-81 para. 10] p. 84, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Because of the pride and ambition of the children of men, God has chosen to perform his mighty works by the most simple and humble means. It is not the men whom the world honors as great, talented, or brilliant, that God selects. He chooses those who will work in meekness and simplicity, acknowledging him as their leader and their source of strength. He would have us make him our protector and our guide in all the duties and affairs of life. [Cf: ST 07-14-81 para. 11] p. 84, Para. 2, [1881MS].

His care for the works of his creation is unwearied and incessant. When men go forth to their daily toil, as when they engage in prayer; when they lie down at night, and when they rise in the morning; when the rich man feasts in his palace, when the poor man gathers his children about the scanty board, each is tenderly watched by his Heavenly Father. No tears can be shed that God does not notice. There is no smile that he does not mark. Those to whom he has committed

important trusts he regards with vigilance. All their actions and most secret motives must pass his scrutiny. He has bestowed upon them all their talents and abilities, and he will hold them to a strict account for the improvement of these gifts. If they attain success, it is because the God of wisdom has prospered them. [Cf: ST 07-14-81 para. 12] p. 84, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The Majesty of Heaven works by whom he will. His providence sometimes selects the humblest instruments to do the greatest work; for his power is revealed through the weakness of men. We have our standard of reckoning, and by it we pronounce one thing great, and another small; but God estimates not according to the standard of men; he does not graduate his scale by theirs. We are not to suppose that what is great to us must be great to God, and what is small to us must be small to him. [Cf: ST 07-14-81 para. 13] p. 84, Para. 4, [1881MS].

He who upholds the unnumbered worlds throughout immensity, at the same time cares for the wants of the little brown sparrow that sings its humble song without a fear. He cares for everything and sustains everything throughout the universe that he has created. [Cf: ST 07-14-81 para. 14] p. 84, Para. 5, [1881MS].

If we would but fully believe this, all undue anxieties would be dismissed. With humble prayer and trusting faith, we would seek counsel from God in all our plans and purposes of life. Then all our acts would be governed by discretion, our energies would be rightly directed. Then our lives would not be so filled with disappointment as now; for everything, small or great, would be left in the hands of God, who is not perplexed by the multiplicity of cares, nor overwhelmed by their weight. We should then enjoy a rest of soul to which many have long been strangers. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 07-14-81 para. 15] p. 84, Para. 6, [1881MS].

After the overthrow of the Midianites, the tidings spread swiftly far and wide that Israel's God had again fought for his people. No words can describe the terror of the surrounding nations when they learned what simple means had prevailed against all the power and skill of a bold, warlike race. [Cf: ST 07-21-81 para. 01] p. 85, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Wherever the news spread, all felt that the victory must be ascribed to God alone. Thus the Lord's name was glorified, the faith of Israel strengthened, and their enemies were brought to shame and confusion. [Cf: ST 07-21-81 para. 02] p. 85, Para. 2, [1881MS].

It is not safe for God's people to adopt the maxims and customs of the ungodly. The divine principles and modes of working are widely different from those of the world. The history of nations presents no such victories as the conquest of Jericho or the overthrow of the Midianites. No general of heathen armies had ever conducted warfare as Joshua and Gideon had done. These victories teach the great lesson that the only sure ground of success is the help of God, working with human effort. Those who trust to their own wisdom and their own skill will surely be disappointed. The only safe course in all the plans and purposes of life is to preserve the simplicity of faith. Humble trust in God and faithful obedience to his will are as essential to the Christian in waging spiritual warfare as they were to Gideon and his

brave associates in fighting the battles of the Lord. [Cf: ST 07-21-81 para. 03] p. 85, Para. 3, [1881MS].

God's commands must be implicitly obeyed, irrespective of the world's opinion. This lesson should not be disregarded by those who occupy positions of responsibility among their fellowmen. Such persons above all others should neglect none of the Lord's ordinances or commands. He who conforms to the customs and practices of the world separates himself from God. All should earnestly improve every religious privilege, and inquire of God daily to learn his will. The life and words of Christ must be diligently studied, and his instructions cheerfully obeyed. He who will thus gird on the armor of righteousness need not fear the enemies of god. He may be assured of the presence and protection of the Captain of the Lord's host. [Cf: ST 07-21-81 para. 04] p. 85, Para. 4, [1881MS].

It is a sad fact that the simplicity of true faith has, in a great measure, departed from the church of Christ. Many who occupy responsible positions are in constant danger of separating themselves from God by neglect of the means of grace. They do not drink daily at the fountain of wisdom and righteousness, and do not acknowledge God as the right arm of their power. [Cf: ST 07-21-81 para. 05] p. 85, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The Lord is willing to give his people a precious experience. He would lead them to confide in his wisdom, his power, and his love, instead of trusting to themselves. He would teach them to submit their judgment and their will implicitly to him. Then will they see and know that of themselves they can do nothing; that God is all and in all. His love will dwell in their hearts, and his praise will be continually upon their lips. God works for his people by agencies which the proud and worldly-wise will despise; but the grace and power of God are the only hope of sinful men. [Cf: ST 07-21-81 para. 06] p. 85, Para. 6, [1881MS].

After his glorious victory over the Midianites, Gideon was subjected to another test, differing widely from those already given, but unexpected and peculiarly severe. He must now meet unjust accusation and censure. When, at his call, the men of Israel had rallied against the Midianites, the tribe of Ephraim had remained behind. They looked upon the effort as a perilous and doubtful undertaking, and as Gideon sent them no special invitation, they availed themselves of this excuse not to join their brethren. But when the news of Israel's triumph reached them, the Ephraimites were dissatisfied and envious because they had not shared it. [Cf: ST 07-21-81 para. 07] p. 86, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Gideon was not anxious to secure the honor to himself, for he knew that it belonged to the Lord alone. As soon as the Midianites were routed, Gideon had sent swift messengers, desiring the Ephraimites to seize the fords of the Jordan that the fugitives might not escape. A large number of the enemy were slain, among whom were two of the chief princes of Midian. Thus the men of Ephraim followed up the battle, and helped complete the victory. Nevertheless, they were jealous and angry, as though Gideon were governed by his own will and judgment. They did not discern God's hand in the triumph of Israel, and this very fact proved that they were indeed unworthy to be used as his instruments on

that occasion. They would have taken the honor to themselves, instead of ascribing it to God. The wicked spirit manifested toward Gideon shows that they were not men who could be trusted, who would appreciate God's mercy and power in their deliverance. [Cf: ST 07-21-81 para. 08] p. 86, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The wisdom of God, as displayed in the methods and instrumentalities employed to carry forward his work, is foolishness to the boastful and self-confident, because they know not the mystery of godliness. The Lord would teach his people at the present day the lesson of simple dependence upon that mighty arm which can overthrow the strongholds of Satan. The prayer of faith, offered by God's humble, obedient, trusting people, will bring them the victory. [Cf: ST 07-21-81 para. 09] p. 86, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The most complete and perfect system which men have ever despised, apart from the power and wisdom of God, will prove a failure; while the humble means which God sanctions must succeed. The simple act of blowing a blast upon the trumpet, by the army of Joshua around Jericho, and by Gideon's little band about the host of Midian, was made effectual, through the power of God, to overthrow the might of his enemies. Deep are the counsels of God, and the finite mind seeks in vain to comprehend them. [Cf: ST 07-21-81 para. 10] p. 86, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The bullock standing between the altar for sacrifice and the plow in the furrow,--ready for either,--fitly represents the position which God's people should occupy. The Lord has no place in his work for the indolent and self-indulgent. Like the men of Ephraim, there are many at the present day who are ready to work diligently to secure honor to themselves; but unless they can do this they will not work at all. And not only will they do nothing themselves, but by their example and influence they will discourage others. [Cf: ST 07-21-81 para. 11] p. 86, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The men of Ephraim, returning from the fords of the Jordan with the trophies of victory, addressed Gideon in terms of angry reproach: "Why hast thou served us thus, that thou calledst us not when thou wentest to fight with the Midianites?" [Cf: ST 07-21-81 para. 12] p. 87, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Gideon knew that he had acted by the divine command, and though harshly censured by those who should have commended, he restrained all feelings of anger or indignation. How easily the spirit of jealousy and discontent might have been fanned into a quarrel that would have caused division, bloodshed, and ruin! By his self-control, Gideon showed himself a hero. He proved the truth of those words written so long afterward, "A soft answer turneth away wrath." In his reply to the Ephraimites he modestly threw a veil over his own success, but spoke in the highest praise of their achievements: "What have I done now in comparison of you?" Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abi-ezer? God hath delivered into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb; and what was I able to do in comparison of you?" He represented the victory gained by himself and his army of three hundred men as little in comparison with their taking the princes of Midian. And he further showed that the glory belonged neither to him nor to them, but to the Lord. [Cf: ST 07-21-81 para. 13]

p. 87, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Gideon's modest and prudent answer appeased the anger of the men of Ephraim, and they returned in peace to their homes. How much of the trouble that exists in the world today, springs from the same evil traits that actuated the men of Ephraim, and how many evils might be avoided if all who are unjustly accused or censured would manifest the meek, self-forgetful spirit of Gideon. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 07-21-81 para. 14] p. 87, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The people of Israel, filled with joy and gratitude at their deliverance from the Midianites, proposed to Gideon that he should become their king, and that the throne should be confirmed to his descendants. His answer shows how true and noble were the motives by which he was actuated. "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you. The Lord shall rule over you." At the divine command, Gideon had willingly gone forth to battle for Israel; he had not shrunk from duty, nor hesitated in the face of danger; but he nobly refused to accept from the people those honors which the Lord had reserved to himself the right to bestow. [Cf: ST 07-28-81 para. 01] p. 87, Para. 4, [1881MS].

God had manifested special favor to Gideon, in selecting him as the instrument through whom to deliver Israel. While great responsibilities rested upon him in this important crisis, Gideon's course was marked with humility and faithful obedience. God accepted his work, and crowned his efforts with success. But now Gideon was assailed by temptation in a new form. When the reprover of wrong has done his work, in obedience to God's commands, the period of inactivity which succeeds the struggle, is often the most dangerous. This danger Gideon now experienced. A spirit of unrest was upon him. Hitherto he had been content to execute the commands given him of God; but now, instead of calmly waiting for divine instruction, he began to devise and execute plans for himself. He had not learned to wait as well as to labor--to suffer God's will as well as to do it. [Cf: ST 07-28-81 para. 02] p. 87, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Satan is never idle. He is filled with hatred against God, and is constantly enticing men into a wrong course of action. After the armies of the Lord have gained a signal victory, the great adversary is especially busy. He comes disguised as an angel of light, and as such he endeavors to overthrow the work of God. Thus thoughts and plans were suggested to the mind of Gideon, by which Israel were led astray. [Cf: ST 07-28-81 para. 03] p. 88, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The tribes on the east side of the Jordan were quite a distance from the tabernacle at Shiloh, to which all the men of Israel were required to repair three times a year, to attend the great annual feasts. This of course, required a considerable outlay of time and means. The thought was suggested to Gideon that it would be a great advantage to these tribes to have a place at home, for sacrifice and worship. [Cf: ST 07-28-81 para. 04] p. 88, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Without waiting for the divine sanction, he determined to provide a suitable place and to institute a system of worship similar to that carried on at the tabernacle at Shiloh. He had refused the urgent solicitations to become king of Israel, but he now determined to take

advantage of the popular feeling in his favor to carry out the plan he had devised. As his share of the spoil taken from the Midianites, he asked that all the ear-rings of gold might be given him, promising that he would put them to a wise use. [Cf: ST 07-28-81 para. 05] p. 88, Para. 3, [1881MS].

As is natural, even at the present day, the people of Israel were more ready to ascribe the honor of the victory to Gideon than to the Lord. They readily complied with the request, and also collected many other costly materials, together with the richly adorned garments of the princes of Midian. [Cf: ST 07-28-81 para. 06] p. 88, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The total value of the spoil thus contributed was not less than fifteen thousand dollars. From the material thus furnished, Gideon constructed an ephod and a breastplate of judgment in imitation of those worn by the high priest. [Cf: ST 07-28-81 para. 07] p. 88, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Gideon led the people to look upon this ephod and the breastplate as possessing special sacredness in themselves. In this he erred. All that could make them sacred was the fact that they were employed in the solemn service of God as he had directed. The high priest alone was authorized to wear them when he went in before the Lord. [Cf: ST 07-28-81 para. 08] p. 88, Para. 6, [1881MS].

Because he had been commanded to offer a sacrifice upon the rock where the angel appeared to him, Gideon concluded that he had been divinely appointed to officiate as a priest, and that by instituting a service there, he might save the people the trouble and expense of their journeys to Shiloh. [Cf: ST 07-28-81 para. 09] p. 88, Para. 7, [1881MS].

The Lord was not pleased with this arrangement, for it was contrary to the order which he had established. It was an assumption of authority on the part of Gideon which proved disastrous to himself and to all Israel. God designs that his people shall place a high estimate upon every provision for their salvation. He desires them to appreciate his great mercy and condescension, and to manifest gratitude and zeal proportionate to the value of the great gift of the Son of God. But we are disposed to shun sacrifice and self-denial for our eternal interest, while we readily devote time and strength to seeking temporal advantage. Thus our conduct too often shows that we place a higher estimate upon earthly things than upon the heavenly treasure. [Cf: ST 07-28-81 para. 10] p. 88, Para. 8, [1881MS].

It is the work of God's true people to advance his glory in the earth. Through connection with him, they will be imbued with divine wisdom, which will lead them to place a right estimate upon eternal things. The Lord desired his people to go up to the tabernacle at Shiloh, at the stated seasons, even though it might require considerable sacrifice. That very effort would lead them to place a higher value upon their religious privileges. [Cf: ST 07-28-81 para. 11] p. 89, Para. 1, [1881MS].

In seeking to bring the worship of God nearer home, Gideon was but providing to indulge the people in their indolence. This would have no

beneficial influence upon them. All plans based upon human reasoning should be looked upon with a jealous eye, lest Satan insinuate himself into the position which belongs to God alone. The course pursued by Gideon proved a snare, not only to himself and family, but to all Israel. The irregular and unauthorized worship led the people finally to forsake the Lord altogether, to serve idols. The ephod and the breastplate were regarded with pride, because of their costly material and exquisite workmanship; and after a time were looked upon with superstitious reverence. The services at the place of worship were celebrated with feasting and merriment, and at last became a scene of dissipation and licentiousness. Thus Israel were led away from God by the very man who had once overthrown their idolatry. [Cf: ST 07-28-81 para. 12] p. 89, Para. 2, [1881MS].

If men could foresee the result of their course, if they could realize the influence which they exert upon their own families and upon society, they would move with greater caution, and would maintain a firmer reliance upon God. The misconduct of parents frequently produces the most ruinous effects upon their children and associates, after the actors themselves have been laid in the grave. There is no evil which man should so much dread, as being given up to his own lusts. This was the fate of Israel. After Gideon's death, the people, especially his own house, plunged into the grossest idolatry. [Cf: ST 07-28-81 para. 13] p. 89, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Thus the snare which Gideon had so unwittingly set, entrapped the unwary feet of thousands. A snare,--how many snares are to be found in our path today! There is need that light from above be constantly shed upon our way, that we may see the snares laid for our feet. Oh, that fathers and mothers could realize the dangers that beset their path and the path of their children! [Cf: ST 07-28-81 para. 14] p. 89, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Those who are placed in the highest positions may lead astray, especially if they feel that there is no danger. The wisest err; the strongest grow weary. Excess of caution is often attended with as great danger as excess of confidence. To go forward without stumbling, we must have the assurance that a hand all-powerful will hold us up, and an infinite pity be exercised toward us if we fall. God alone can at all times hear our cry for help. [Cf: ST 07-28-81 para. 15] p. 89, Para. 5, [1881MS].

It is a solemn thought that the removal of one safeguard from the conscience, the failure to fulfill one good resolution, the formation of one wrong habit, may result not only in our own ruin, but in the ruin of those who have put confidence in us. Our only safety is to follow where the steps of the Master lead the way, to trust for protection implicitly to Him who says, "Follow me." Our constant prayer should be, "Hold up my goings in thy path, O Lord, that my footsteps slip not." [Cf: ST 07-28-81 para. 16] p. 90, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The Israelites needed the benefits of assembling for worship and entering into covenant together to serve the Lord. In separating themselves from the place of worship divinely appointed, they lost much. God had servants whose lips he unsealed to speak words of warning, encouragement, and reproof, so that the light received from Heaven by one shone not for himself alone, but to lighten the path of

others. God knows best what his people need. His words come down to us, in warning and instruction,--"Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." [Cf: ST 07-28-81 para. 17] p. 90, Para. 2, [1881MS].

At the present day, as in ancient times, the people of God plead their own ease or convenience as an excuse for neglecting divine service. They will devise means to preserve the Christian name without making any sacrifice of time or means. God requires his people to maintain his worship. And those who are burdened with care and responsibility, should be the last to excuse themselves from religious privileges. They need wisdom from above. They need to be constantly reaching upward to lay hold on the divine arm, lest they stumble and fall. They can walk safely, only as they fear God, and obey his voice. Those whom God has burdened with a place in his work, need not be left to their own judgment, as was Gideon, to lead men away from the right path. The feet that God is guiding will press on in a way which leads straight forward, ever ascending, and ever brightening, until it reaches the brightness of eternal day. [Cf: ST 07-28-81 para. 18] p. 90, Para. 3, [1881MS].

All wrongdoing is forsaking the path where Jesus leads, turning aside to the crooked ways of darkness. Those who are determined in the strength of Jesus to make the most of their opportunities, seizing every ray of light that Heaven sheds on their pathway, will go straight forward, fulfilling their duty to God and to their fellow-men. They will not fall, nor stumble. A divine Guide goes before the faithful, encouraging them with his voice, aiding them with his hand, and they need never mistake the way. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 07-28-81 para. 19] p. 90, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The course of Israel, after the death of Gideon, is thus described by the sacred historian: "The children of Israel remembered not the Lord their God, who had delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies on every side. Neither showed they kindness to the house of Jerubbaal, namely Gideon, according to all the goodness which he had shewed unto Israel." [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 01] p. 90, Para. 5, [1881MS].

When men cast away the fear of God, we need not be surprised to see them departing from the path of honor and integrity. They are following another guide. They hurry on in the journey of life, heedless, presumptuous, yet ever fearful and dissatisfied; for they have left the only one who can give them rest and security. When once started in a wrong path, many press on as if infatuated, although every step leads them farther from the Source of light and the Tower of strength. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 02] p. 91, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The great sin of Israel had ever been that of departing from God, forgetting his matchless love and his mighty power as revealed again and again in their deliverance. An appreciation of the Lord's mercy and goodness will lead to an appreciation of those who, like Gideon, have been employed as instruments to bless his people. The cruel course of Israel toward the house of Gideon was what might be expected from a people who manifested such base ingratitude to God. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 03] p. 91, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The calamities which had constantly threatened them being past, the selfishness of Israel now became apparent. The men so grateful after that glorious victory over Midian, now forgot their offer to place Gideon and his sons upon the throne. They had been filled with wonder and admiration by the noble, unselfish, unambitious spirit which prompted him to refuse the honor, both for himself and for his sons. But the impression wore away as other influences were brought to bear upon them. Gratitude died out of their hearts, and after Gideon's death, the people treated his sons with the basest neglect and cruelty. The human heart is fickle. It is not to be trusted. All who rely upon the favor or support of men will sooner or later find themselves leaning upon a broken reed. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 04] p. 91, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Yet Gideon himself had sowed the seeds for that baleful harvest, when he performed that one wrong act by which Israel were led away from God. Now they had become blinded by the sophistry of Satan, and they were wandering away from Him who was their light, their strength, and their glory. The Lord withdrew his restraining Spirit from them, and gave them up to their own base passions. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 05] p. 91, Para. 4, [1881MS].

According to the evil custom of those days, Gideon had taken numerous wives, and at his death he left no less than seventy sons. Besides these, there was another, Abimelech, "the son of a strange woman." This person had no right in the inheritance with Gideon's lawful children, and his debased character rendered him still more unworthy to be numbered with the descendants of the illustrious leader. The sons of Gideon had concurred in their father's refusal to accept the throne of Israel, but Abimelech determined to secure the position for himself. Being a native of Shechem, where his mother's relatives dwelt, he induced them to influence the Shechemites in his favor. He endeavored to advance his own interests by basely misrepresenting his brethren. He accused them of designing to seize upon the government and unite in its administration, and he sought to convince the people that it would be much better for them to be ruled by one of their own number than by such a band of tyrants. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 06] p. 91, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Had the Israelites preserved a clear perception of right and wrong, they would have seen the fallacy of Abimelech's reasoning, and the injustice of his claims. They would have seen that he was filled with envy, and actuated by a base ambition to exalt himself by the ruin of his brethren. Those who are controlled by policy rather than by principle are not to be trusted. They will pervert the truth, conceal facts, and construe the words of others to mean that which was never intended. They will employ flattering words, while the poison of asps is under their tongue. He who does not earnestly seek the divine guidance will be deceived by their smooth words and their artful plans. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 07] p. 92, Para. 1, [1881MS].

There are many who would scorn the appellation of policy men, yet who will stoop to concealment, evasion, and even misrepresentation, to accomplish their purposes. He who, in a matter of right and wrong, remains noncommittal that he may retain the friendship of all; he who seeks to secure by evasion of truth what should be won by courage; he who waits for others to take the lead, when he should go forward

himself, and then feels at liberty to censure their course,--all these are in God's sight numbered as deceivers. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 08] p. 92, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Abimelech was successful in his schemes, and was accepted, at first by the Shechemites, and afterward by the people generally, as the ruler of Israel. But while thus exalted to the highest position in the gift of the nation, he was utterly unworthy of the trust. His birth was ignoble, his character vicious. The higher and nobler qualities,--virtue, integrity, and truth,--he had never cherished. He possessed a strong will and indomitable perseverance, and thus, by the most unscrupulous measures, he accomplished his purposes. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 09] p. 92, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The Israelites, blinded by their own sinful course of apostasy, were acting directly contrary to God's express commands, and he left them to reap the results of their own folly. It was not God's will that Israel should have a king. But in case they desired to be thus governed, the Lord, understanding the pride and perversity of the human heart, had reserved to himself the right to appoint a king over them. God had brought Israel out from Egypt to be a peculiar people, especially devoted to himself, and unlike any other people. Israel's great ambition to imitate the idolatrous nations around them was the result of separation from God. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 10] p. 92, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Pride and ambition similar to that which cursed ancient Israel, exists in the church of God today. They are unwilling to be a peculiar people, distinct and separate from the world. To reach the Bible standard requires self-denial, a crucifixion of the affections and lusts. The unsanctified heart reaches out for forbidden things, but these very objects of desire will prove now, as anciently, a source of weakness and corruption. Christ "gave himself for us, that he might cleanse us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Those who seek the honor which comes from men are ever ready to adopt the customs and practices of the world. They gain their position by the exercise of traits of character which should lie dormant. If only those were exalted who had gained their position by fidelity to God and to man, the standard of morality and religion among the people would be elevated. The sin of which we are guilty in acting contrary to God's expressed will is as much greater than was that of ancient Israel, as our light and privileges have been greater than theirs. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 11] p. 92, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The Shechemites sealed the compact with their new king by presenting him with a sum of money from the treasure which had been dedicated to their god, Baal-berith. By accepting the gift, Abimelech covenanted, at the very commencement of his reign, to use his influence and authority to promote the worship of this god. Thus he publicly pledged himself to counteract, as far as possible, the work which Gideon his father had done in overthrowing idolatry. Such has ever been the history of the world since the fall of man. God will use those who give themselves wholly to his service. And Satan not only marshals his host of evil angels and arrays them against God, but he employs men to execute his plans and to defy the King of Heaven. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 12] p. 93, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Abimelech now proceeded to execute his power as suited his cruel character. With the money he had received, he hired a set of unprincipled men who were ready for any crime. At the head of this company he marched to Ophrah, where Gideon's family still dwelt, and basely murdered them all, except one brother, Jotham, who escaped. Abimelech well knew that these men were far better qualified than himself to stand at the head of the kingdom; and he felt that while they lived, his throne would not be secure. Hence he conceived and executed this fiendish crime, that he might undisturbed enjoy the coveted honor, being the first who had borne the name of king among the descendants of Jacob. Returning in triumph to Shechem, Abimelech was immediately anointed king. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 13] p. 93, Para. 2, [1881MS].

When Jotham was informed of this, he immediately repaired to Shechem. Burning with a sense of the horrible injustice and cruelty heaped upon his family, he determined at all hazards to present it before the people in its true light. While the multitude were engaged in festivities in honor of their king, celebrating the occasion with hilarious mirth and sensual gratification, Jotham ascended Mount Gerizim to a position where he could be seen and heard by all the people, and addressed them in words of keen reproof. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 14] p. 93, Para. 3, [1881MS].

In a most fitting and beautiful parable, he presented before them the folly and injustice of their course. He represented the trees as seeking to make one of their number king over them. But the olive refused to leave its oil, the fig tree its fruit, and the vine tree its wine. The worthless bramble, however, readily appropriated the honor and at once stated the conditions of its acceptance: "If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow; and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon." [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 15] p. 93, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The unselfish, unambitious conduct of Gideon and his sons was then forcibly portrayed, and also the ingratitude of the Shechemites. Jotham then concluded in words which proved to be a prophecy: "If ye then have dealt truly and sincerely with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, then rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you. But if not let fire come out from Abimelech and devour the men of Shechem and the house of Millo; and let fire come out from the men of Shechem, and from the house of Millo, and devour Abimelech." [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 16] p. 93, Para. 5, [1881MS].

After delivering this speech, Jotham, fled and dwelt in a part of the country beyond the power of Abimelech. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 17] p. 94, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The transaction of making Abimelech their king, shows how low Israel had fallen. What a contrast between their humble, God-fearing leader, Moses, who had felt wholly unworthy to occupy his position, and this upstart king, who had secured the throne by treachery, and established himself by violence and bloodshed. It should send terror to our souls when we reflect to what lengths men may go in crime, when they have rejected the influence of God's Spirit. A despot, a murderer, was placed as commander-in-chief of Israel. Satan was now exultant. He had gained control of the mind of Abimelech, and through him he hoped to

rule the people. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 18] p. 94, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Truly what a striking contrast between the self-sacrificing, devoted leader whom God appointed, and the monster of ingratitude and cruelty whom Israel had now placed upon the throne. By the olive, the fig tree, and the vine, in Jotham's parable, were represented such noble, upright characters as Moses and Joshua, who had been a living illustration of what a leader of Israel should be. Such men claimed no kingly honors. It was their work to bless their fellow-men, and they did not aspire to rank or power. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 19] p. 94, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The worthless bramble, grasping for honor, and destroying that which was better than itself, was a fitting symbol of the vile and cruel Abimelech. Millo was the name of the senate-house, or townhall, and by the house of Millo are meant the chief men of Shechem, who had united in making Abimelech their king, but who, according to Jotham's prophecy, were to destroy Abimelech, and to be destroyed by him. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 20] p. 94, Para. 4, [1881MS].

For three years this wicked man's reign continued, and then the Lord sent trouble among those who had united in an evil course. The very men who had made Abimelech king became disgusted with his demoralizing rule, and his heartless tyranny. By treachery he had gained the throne, and now by treachery they determined to remove him. The words of Jotham were fulfilled. Discord, strife, and hatred prevailed between Abimelech and his subjects. The king's cruelty had not ended with the sons of Gideon. Everyone who opposed his will was summarily put to death. But the time of retribution, both for Abimelech and for the Shechemites who had sustained him, was at hand. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 21] p. 94, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The city of Shechem having rebelled, it was attacked by the king's forces, the inhabitants were slain, the city itself was reduced to ashes, and the ground was sown with salt, as a token of perpetual desolation. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 22] p. 94, Para. 6, [1881MS].

A neighboring city united with Shechem in the insurrection, and Abimelech proceeded next to attack this place also. Having gained possession, he determined to burn the inhabitants with the tower, as he had done at Shechem. But the wicked king had passed the limits of divine forbearance. He had been permitted to execute the vengeance of God upon Israel, and his career of crime was now to be cut short. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 23] p. 94, Para. 7, [1881MS].

As they were about to burn the tower, the king approached too near for his own safety. A piece of millstone hurled by the hand of a woman, struck and fatally wounded him. To avoid the disgrace of dying by a woman's hand, he was, at his own request, immediately slain by his armor bearer. Thus ended the career of Abimelech. A vile murderer no longer lived to execute his tyranny. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 24] p. 95, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Thus the justice of God punished both Abimelech and the Shechemites. This terrible history should teach us the lesson that sin will never go unpunished, and it should impress upon our minds the danger of entering upon the path of disobedience. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 25] p. 95, Para. 2, [1881MS].

All true greatness of character, all peace and joy of soul, must come from entire conformity to the will of God. The path of cheerful obedience is the path of safety and happiness. Messages of mercy are sent from Heaven, to teach us the right way. Strength for the conflict of life is ever awaiting us. With the help of God we may gain the victory. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 08-04-81 para. 26] p. 95, Para. 3, [1881MS].

After the death of Abimelech, the usurper, the Lord raised up Tola to judge Israel. His peaceful reign presented a happy contrast to the stormy scenes through which the nation had been passing. It was not his work to lead armies to battle and to achieve victories over the enemies of Israel, as the former rulers had done; but his influence effected a closer union among the people, and established the government upon a firmer basis. He restored order, law, and justice. [Cf: ST 08-11-81 para. 01] p. 95, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Unlike the proud and envious Abimelech, Tola's great desire was, not to secure position or honor for himself, but to improve the condition of his people. A man of deep humility, he felt that he could accomplish no great work, but he determined to perform with faithfulness his duty to God and to the people. He highly valued the privilege of divine worship, and chose to dwell near the tabernacle, that he might oftener attend upon the services there performed. [Cf: ST 08-11-81 para. 02] p. 95, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Devotion and humility have ever characterized the men with whom God has intrusted important responsibilities in his work. The divine call to Moses in the desert found him distrustful of self. He realized his unfitness for the position to which God had called him; but having accepted the trust, he became a polished instrument in the hand of God to accomplish the greatest work ever committed to mortals. [Cf: ST 08-11-81 para. 03] p. 95, Para. 6, [1881MS].

Had Moses trusted to his own strength and wisdom, and eagerly accepted the great charge, he would have evinced his entire unfitness for such a work. The fact that a man feels his own weakness, is at least some evidence that he realizes the magnitude of the work appointed him, and this gives room for hope that he will make God his counselor and his strength. Such a person will move no farther nor faster than he knows God is leading him. [Cf: ST 08-11-81 para. 04] p. 95, Para. 7, [1881MS].

A man will gain power and efficiency as he accepts the responsibilities which God places upon him, and with his whole soul seeks to qualify himself to bear them aright. However humble his position or limited his ability, that individual will attain true greatness who cheerfully responds to the call of duty, and, trusting to the divine strength, seeks to perform his work with fidelity. He will feel that he has a sacred commission to battle against wrong, to strengthen the right, to elevate, comfort, and bless his fellow-men. Indolence, selfishness, and love of worldly approbation must yield to this high and holy calling. [Cf: ST 08-11-81 para. 05] p. 96, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Engaged in such a work, the weak man will become strong; the timid,

brave; the irresolute, firm and decided. Each sees the importance of his position and his course, inasmuch as Heaven has chosen him to do a special work for the King of kings. Such men will leave the world better for their having lived in it. Their influence is exerted to elevate, to purify, and to ennoble all with whom they come in contact, and thus they help to prepare their fellow-men for the heavenly courts. [Cf: ST 08-11-81 para. 06] p. 96, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Tola governed Israel twenty-three years, and was succeeded by Jair. This ruler also feared the Lord and endeavored to maintain his worship among the people. In conducting the affairs of the government he was assisted by his sons, who acted as magistrates, and went from place to place to administer justice. [Cf: ST 08-11-81 para. 07] p. 96, Para. 3, [1881MS].

To some extent, during the latter part of Jair's reign, and more generally after his death, the Israelites again relapsed into idolatry. The sacred record states, "And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the Lord, and served not him." [Cf: ST 08-11-81 para. 08] p. 96, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The divine judgments followed close upon the transgressions of Israel. The Ammonites made war upon them in the east, and the Philistines in the west. Other nations, also, united with these in the oppression of Israel, until they seemed again to be shut in by relentless foes. In the days of prosperity, God's people had forsaken him, and now he seemed to have forsaken them, and they knew not which way to turn for help. Thus was again fulfilled the word of the Lord by the mouth of Joshua, that the heathen nations, if not promptly destroyed, would prove to Israel as snares for their feet, and as thorns in their eyes. [Cf: ST 08-11-81 para. 09] p. 96, Para. 5, [1881MS].

When the sins of a nation are punished, the innocent often suffer with the guilty. Among apostate Israel, the Lord still had faithful servants. These labored to show Israel their transgressions, and that all their troubles were but the results of their apostasy. But the words of warning seemed for a time to fall unheeded. [Cf: ST 08-11-81 para. 10] p. 96, Para. 6, [1881MS].

We repeat what has been so often said before, that among the people of God today are dangers similar to those that well-nigh destroyed Israel. The command, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," was spoken from Sinai for every soul that should live upon the earth. We can no more free ourselves from the claims of God's law than we can hide from his all-seeing eye. Its precepts reached every case, and its claims rest upon all the children of men to the close of time. [Cf: ST 08-11-81 para. 11] p. 97, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Idolatry has separated the people of God from him; he has not the first place in their thoughts and affections. Professed Christians fail to realize their accountability to God. They forget that he is ever present, to assert his supreme authority, and to take cognizance of all their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil. [Cf: ST 08-11-81 para. 12] p. 97, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Satan once presented all the attractions of the world to Christ, to allure him from the path of duty. Having failed in this, the arch deceiver tries the same device with the followers of Jesus, and meets with much better success. Thus Satan receives the devotion which God claims. How many employ all the Creator's gifts merely to glorify themselves. How many set their affections upon their worldly possessions, or seek above all else the applause of men. How many choose the atmosphere of vanity and worldliness, rather than that of sobriety, purity, and godliness. They are so far from God that they cannot discern the true value of eternal things. And there are some who glory in their unbelief, making this an excuse for their defects of character. Unbelief is the idol which they worship. They willfully grope in darkness constantly diffusing mist and fog to shadow their own path and the path of others. But still the voice from Sinai sounds in our ears, addressing this class no less than all others, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." [Cf: ST 08-11-81 para. 13] p. 97, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Many who profess to be the disciples of Jesus seem as indifferent and careless in their religious life, as though no responsibility rested upon them to deny self and bear the cross. They do not realize their duty, by personal example and earnest effort to help others to follow in the same path. God would be to us the very help we need, if we would make him first, and last, and best, in all the purposes and events of life. Every plan devised should bear the high signet of Heaven, rather than the seal of worldly commendation. [Cf: ST 08-11-81 para. 14] p. 97, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The reason why so many are walking in darkness is that they pursue a path which leads directly away from God. Christ came to give the world an example of a pure and perfect life. He sacrificed himself for the joy of saving the lost. Whoever follows Christ will work the works of Christ. Pride and selfishness will not be cherished, every sinful indulgence will be put away, the soul temple will be cleansed from every idolatrous shrine. Until this shall take place, we cannot claim to be free from Israel's great sin of idolatry. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 08-11-81 para. 15] p. 97, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Exposed to the power of their enemies, the children of Israel at last realized the perils of their situation, and the futility of all their efforts against the oppressor. Then they began to seek help from Him whom they had so forsaken and insulted. They saw in some measure, how far they had separated themselves from the only One who could help them. "And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, saying, We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Baalim." [Cf: ST 08-18-81 para. 01] p. 97, Para. 6, [1881MS].

But infinite wisdom saw that they sorrowed because of the consequences of their sin--the suffering which it had brought upon themselves,-- rather than because they had offended God. The Lord answered them, through one of his faithful prophets:-- [Cf: ST 08-18-81 para. 02] p. 98, Para. 1, [1881MS].

"Did not I deliver you from the Egyptians, and from the Amorites, from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines? Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other gods; wherefore I will deliver you no more." [Cf:

ST 08-18-81 para. 03] p. 98, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Thus the Lord presented before them his goodness, his long suffering, his pity for their distress, and the wonderful deliverances which he had wrought for them again and again. Notwithstanding all his love and care, they had once more forsaken him, and had sinned more grievously than ever before, choosing the service of idols, instead of the worship of the living God. Now, in their distress, he bade them, "Go and cry unto the Gods which ye have chosen. Let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation." [Cf: ST 08-18-81 para. 04] p. 98, Para. 3, [1881MS].

But there was hope for Israel as soon as they began sincerely to repent and humbly cry unto God. They had been led to see what would be their condition, should the Lord leave them to be delivered by the gods in whom they trusted. They would be subdued by the very nations that in God's strength they had once conquered. Had Israel preserved their connection with God, they would have derived honor, dignity, and power from this relationship. [Cf: ST 08-18-81 para. 05] p. 98, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Allied to the King of kings, the Lord of life and glory, the vilest sinner may become a partaker of the divine nature, and an heir of eternal riches. "To them gave he power to become sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." Oh, what condescension, what amazing love, to make fallen man a member of the royal family, a child of the Heavenly King! How can the world's Redeemer look upon those who stubbornly refuse to receive the gifts of a Saviour's love, or who, having professedly accepted him, cast aside as worthless trifles the honor and dignity offered them as his followers! [Cf: ST 08-18-81 para. 06] p. 98, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Multitudes turn with contempt from the pleadings of divine grace and infinite love, to satisfy their desire for forbidden pleasures which prove as the apples of Sodom, beautiful without, but ashes within. Israel had no love for the holy character of God, and they rejected and despised his friendship. Scorning the Creator, they adored the creature; and when, in their distress, they sought unto the long-insulted Jehovah, he pointed them to the gods of their choice, and bade them cry to these deities for help. [Cf: ST 08-18-81 para. 07] p. 98, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The Israelites well knew that their idols were powerless to save or to destroy. They knew that the heathen worship was contrary to reason and sound judgment. But they had gradually departed from God, and had indulged in sin until their moral perceptions were dulled, and they were led astray by Satan. [Cf: ST 08-18-81 para. 08] p. 98, Para. 7, [1881MS].

As we ponder the solemn words of warning addressed to Israel, we are in imagination brought before the great white throne, where in the presence of the assembled universe, every man will be judged according to the deeds done in the body. Then will be seen the true value of a Christian life and character. There must they render an account who have devoted their God-given talents of time, of means, or of intellect, to serving the gods of this world. The searching eye of Jehovah will rest upon all; and that voice which amid the thunders of

Sinai spake to man, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me"--that voice will answer the sinner's imploring cry for pardon, "Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen. Let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation." [Cf: ST 08-18-81 para. 09] p. 99, Para. 1, [1881MS].

None then to pity the folly of those who have despised and forsaken God. None to relieve their distress. They have forsaken their true and loving Friend, to follow the path of convenience and worldly pleasure. They intended at some time to return to God. But the world, with its follies and deceptions, absorbs the attention. Frivolous amusements, pride of dress, indulgence of appetite, harden the heart and benumb the conscience, so that the voice of truth is not heard. Duty is a despised word. Things of infinite value are lightly esteemed, until the heart loses all desire to sacrifice for Him who has given so much for man. But in the reaping time they must gather the crop sown. [Cf: ST 08-18-81 para. 10] p. 99, Para. 2, [1881MS].

"Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you: then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me; for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord; they would none of my counsel; they despised all my reproof. Therefore they shall eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil." [Cf: ST 08-18-81 para. 11] p. 99, Para. 3, [1881MS].

God speaks to us today, in the warnings, counsels, and reproofs given to ancient Israel. If we depart from him, our condemnation will be greater than theirs; for we have their experience as a warning, and all the instruction which God has given since their time. Many and varied are the idols which we cherish; idols that engross the mind and harden the heart, so that sacred things are not rightly valued. Oh that the lessons given to ancient Israel might so impress our hearts and affect our lives that we would fully turn from idols, to serve the living God. [Cf: ST 08-18-81 para. 12] p. 99, Para. 4, [1881MS].

We must not trifle with our present privileges and opportunities, and expect that when lost they will be restored whenever we desire. It is impossible to abuse the powers with which our Creator has endowed us, and yet find them clear and vigorous, to call to our aid whenever we wish to devote them to a nobler, better purpose. The chains of habit, like ropes of steel, are not easily broken. Then how careful should we be to cherish only those traits which we would have to form the texture of character. [Cf: ST 08-18-81 para. 13] p. 99, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The children of Israel had forfeited all right to expect help from God, and they had begun to feel this. They knew not where to turn for human help, and God had apparently forsaken them. His words thrilled their guilty souls with the anguish of remorse. They knew that they deserved to suffer the divine judgment, and to this they were willing to submit, if they might hope once more to be forgiven and restored to

the favor of God. [Cf: ST 08-18-81 para. 14] p. 100, Para. 1, [1881MS].

"And the children of Israel said unto the Lord, We have sinned; do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day. And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the Lord; and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel." [Cf: ST 08-18-81 para. 15] p. 100, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Oh, the longsuffering mercy and condescension of our God! The Lord had been trying his people. When they humbled themselves before him, and repented with sincerity of soul, he heard their prayers, and at once began to deliver Israel. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 08-18-81 para. 16] p. 100, Para. 3, [1881MS].

While Israel was sorely harassed by the children of Ammon on the east, and the Philistines on the west, the Lord hearkened to the prayers of his people, and began to work for their deliverance. After eighteen years of oppression, they made war against the Ammonites, and effectually destroyed their power. But a backsliding and idolatrous people soon forgot the lesson which divine wisdom had so often sought to teach them. As they continued to depart from God, he permitted them still to be oppressed by their powerful enemies, the Philistines. [Cf: ST 09-15-81 para. 01] p. 100, Para. 4, [1881MS].

For a period of forty years the children of Israel were constantly harassed, and at times completely subjugated, by this cruel and warlike nation. They had mingled with these idolaters, uniting with them in commerce, in pleasure, and even in worship, until they seemed to be identified with them in spirit and interest. Then these professed friends of Israel became their bitterest enemies, and sought by every means to accomplish their destruction. [Cf: ST 09-15-81 para. 02] p. 100, Para. 5, [1881MS].

There is still, as with ancient Israel, a constant tendency among the professed people of God to depart from the Lord's instructions, and to imitate the customs and practices of worldlings. The people of the world have given themselves to the service of Satan; and their hearts are opposed to the religion of Jesus Christ. They may profess to acknowledge him as their Redeemer, but they have the same hostility as did the heathen of old, to that religion which calls for self-denial and self-sacrifice. The spirit of the world today is the same that prompted the rejection and crucifixion of the Prince of Life; the same that has consigned his followers to imprisonment, exile, and death. The Christianity which will yield to the influence of the world, and conform itself to their principles and customs, is looked upon with favor by men who are the enemies of God. But when the necessity for holiness of heart and life is presented, then the world feels that its rights are endangered. When the church rebukes fashionable follies, demoralizing amusements, extravagance, and self-indulgence; when Christianity is spiritual, positive, earnest, and aggressive,--then the opposition of the world will be excited. [Cf: ST 09-15-81 para. 03] p. 100, Para. 6, [1881MS].

Our Saviour plainly taught that there could be no harmony between his followers and the world. "Marvel not that the world hate you. Ye know that it hated me before it hated you." The world will love its own.

Those who value the things which it values, will enjoy its friendship. It is the spirit of the world that separates us from God. It is the love of those things which he has condemned that brings his displeasure upon us. As in olden times, the Lord still sends his messengers with words of warning and reproof. He makes it our duty to hear, to understand, and to obey. There are evils among the people of God that call for reform. The light of the present age, the experience of the church in ages past, the teachings of the sacred word for this time,-- all bid us go forward. [Cf: ST 09-15-81 para. 04] p. 101, Para. 1, [1881MS].

There were still in Israel true-hearted ones whose souls were filled with anguish because of the condition of their people. Their prayers of confession, penitence, and faith, went up without ceasing before God. He was not indifferent to their cries, but while there was apparently no response, his providence was preparing for them help suited to their condition. There was not to be found in all Israel a man through whom the Lord could work for the deliverance of his people. The erroneous education given to children, indulgence of appetite, and conformity to the practices of heathenism, had greatly lessened both physical and moral power. [Cf: ST 09-15-81 para. 05] p. 101, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Godly fathers and mothers looked with gloomy forebodings to the future. Many a mother had secretly cherished the hope that she might give to God and to Israel a son who should deliver his people from the oppressor's power. But as parents saw their children coming up with perverted appetites and uncontrolled passions, the inquiry arose, What will the end be? What part will these youth and children act in the great drama of life? In the hearts of many mothers, hope battled against fear; but in other hearts reigned only discouragement and despair. What could the mother do to avert the threatened evils? How could she train her children for God? How banish the nameless terror which oppressed her soul? "Spare us, O God, spare us!" was the oft-repeated prayer. "Let not thy people perish; let us not see our children a prey of the enemy." [Cf: ST 09-15-81 para. 06] p. 101, Para. 3, [1881MS].

At this time the Lord appeared to the wife of Manoah, an Israelite of the tribe of Dan, and informed her that she should have a son; and in view of this, he gave her special instruction concerning her own habits, and also for the treatment of her child. "Now therefore, beware, I pray thee, and drink neither wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing." He also directed that no razor should come upon the head of the child, for he was to be consecrated to God as a Nazarite from his birth, and through him the Lord would begin to deliver Israel from the Philistines. [Cf: ST 09-15-81 para. 07] p. 101, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The woman sought her husband, and after describing the heavenly visitant, she repeated the message of the angel. Then, fearful that they should make some mistake in the important work committed to them, the husband prayed earnestly, "Let the man of God which thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born." [Cf: ST 09-15-81 para. 08] p. 102, Para. 1, [1881MS].

In answer to this petition, the angel again appeared, and Manoah's anxious inquiry was, "How shall we order the child, and how shall we do

unto him?" The previous instruction was repeated,--"Of all that I said unto the woman, let her beware. She may not eat of anything that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing. All that I command her let her observe." [Cf: ST 09-15-81 para. 09] p. 102, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Manoah and his wife knew not that the One thus addressing them was Jesus Christ. They looked upon him as the Lord's messenger, but whether a prophet or an angel, they were at a loss to determine. Wishing to manifest hospitality toward their guest, they entreated him to remain while they should prepare for him a kid. But in their ignorance of his character, they knew not whether to offer it for a burnt offering or to place it before him as food. [Cf: ST 09-15-81 para. 10] p. 102, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The angel answered, "Although thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread; and if thou wilt offer a burnt offering, thou must offer it unto the Lord." Feeling assured, now, that his visitor was a prophet, Manoah said, "What is thy name, that when thy sayings come to pass we may do thee honor." [Cf: ST 09-15-81 para. 11] p. 102, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The answer was, "Why askest thou after my name, seeing it is secret?" Perceiving the divine character of his guest, Manoah "took a kid, with a meat offering, and offered it upon a rock unto the Lord; and the angel did wondrously; and Manoah and his wife looked on." Fire came from the rock, and consumed the sacrifice, and as the flame went up toward heaven, "the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground." There could be no further question as to the character of their visitor. They knew that they had looked upon the Holy One, who, veiling his glory in the cloudy pillar, had been the guide and helper of Israel in the desert. [Cf: ST 09-15-81 para. 12] p. 102, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Amazement, awe, and terror filled Manoah's heart, and he could only exclaim, "We shall surely die, because we have seen God!" But his companion in that solemn hour possessed more faith than he. She reminded him that the Lord had been pleased to accept their sacrifice, and had promised them a son who should begin to deliver Israel. This was an evidence of favor instead of wrath. Had the Lord purposed to destroy them, he would not have wrought this miracle, nor given them a promise which, were they to perish, must fail of fulfillment. [Cf: ST 09-15-81 para. 13] p. 102, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The words uttered by the angel convey an important truth. Our Creator himself declares that the mother's habits prior to the birth of her child will affect its character and destiny. In speaking to this one mother, the Lord spoke to all the anxious, sorrowing mothers of that time, and to all the mothers of succeeding generations. Yes, every mother may now understand her duty. She may know that the character of her children will depend vastly more upon her own habits before their birth, and her personal efforts after their birth, than upon external advantages or disadvantages. [Cf: ST 09-15-81 para. 14] p. 102, Para. 7, [1881MS].

If the mother would be a fit teacher for her children, she must form habits of self-denial and self-control before their birth. She imparts

to them her own qualities of blood, her own strong or weak traits of character. If her ways are established in God, if she heeds the admonitions which he gives, she will do her part to give right character, right temper, and right appetites, to her offspring. [Cf: ST 09-15-81 para. 15] p. 103, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Said the angel, "Let her beware;" that is, be prepared to resist temptation, and stand firmly at her post. Let principle control her appetites and her passions. Of every mother it may be said, "Let her beware." There is something to shun, a necessity of guarding herself if she would seek eminence for the gift of God in her child. If she is unstable, double-minded, unprincipled, she will in most cases cause the future ruin of her child. Her fixed principles of action, her unbending purpose to adhere to right rules, as the wisdom of God dictates, will give these same traits of character to her child. The Lord has spoken, and his words are not to be disregarded. [Cf: ST 09-15-81 para. 16] p. 103, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The divine command was very explicit, prohibiting the use of the fruit of the vine. Every drop of stimulant taken by the mother as a gratification of the appetite, endangers the physical, mental, and moral health of her offspring, and is a direct sin against her Creator. The accumulated misery and wickedness in our world exists in consequence of disregarding the express commands of God. The restrictions are given by the One who made man, who instituted the laws controlling his physical being, and who knows what is for his good. Dare any regard the lesson with indifference? By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 09-15-81 para. 17] p. 103, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Our accountability extends beyond our own well-being. Our influence is constantly affecting others, either for good or for evil. In a pre-eminent degree is this true of all parents. Fathers and mothers who gratify inclination and perverted appetite, at the expense of health, are not only working against their own physical life and moral advancement, but they leave their perverted appetite and their enfeebled moral power, to their children. [Cf: ST 09-22-81 para. 01] p. 103, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Liquor drinkers and tobacco devotees transmit their insatiable craving, their irritable nerves, and their inflamed, corrupted blood to their offspring. The licentious hand down their own weakness and wickedness, with a host of vile and loathsome diseases, as an inheritance to their children. Fashionable vices are debilitating and debasing the race. In physical strength, and in moral and intellectual power, every generation falls lower than the preceding. In consequence of the sinful habits of men, the world has become a vast lazarus. Satan exults at the success of his devices. Society is demoralized, the church is cursed, and God is dishonored. [Cf: ST 09-22-81 para. 02] p. 103, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The violation of God's law lies at the foundation of all the misery that flesh is heir to. It is intemperance, transgression of the laws of life and health, that has shortened the years of men, and made these few years full of sorrow and pain. Parents are not only responsible in most cases for the violent passions and perverted appetites of their children, but for the infirmities of the thousands born deaf and blind and idiotic. Sins of omission and of commission have brought the sure

result. [Cf: ST 09-22-81 para. 03] p. 104, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The effect of stimulants and narcotics is to lessen physical strength; and whatever affects the body, will affect the mind. A stimulant may for a time arouse the energies and produce mental and physical activity; but when the exhilarating influence is gone, both mind and body will be in a worse condition than before. Intoxicating liquors and tobacco have proved a terrible curse to our race, not only weakening the body and confusing the mind, but debasing the morals. As the control of reason is set aside, the animal passions will bear sway. The more freely these poisons are used, the more brutish will become the nature and disposition of men. [Cf: ST 09-22-81 para. 04] p. 104, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Parents who indulge appetite by eating to excess even of wholesome food, place a needless tax upon the system, and their children will be disposed to self-indulgence and gluttony. Such parents transmit their own perverted appetites to their offspring, who have far less moral power to resist temptation than had the parents. Then, instead of seeking to cure the evil which they have wrought, these fathers and mothers, by their own example, educate their children to indulge appetite regardless of reason, and to give loose rein to animal propensities. Many children die before reaching maturity, while many are ruined for time and for eternity, by tempers and appetites transmitted in consequence of the sinful indulgences of the parents. [Cf: ST 09-22-81 para. 05] p. 104, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Unwise, self-indulgent, weak-principled women will urge upon the mother the gratification of every wish and impulse as essential to the well-being of her offspring. But the error of such teaching is clearly seen in the light of facts presented in Bible history. The mother is by the command of God himself placed under the most solemn obligation to restrain perverted appetite. Whose voice will we heed--the teachings of infinite wisdom, or the voice of human ignorance, weakness, and superstition? [Cf: ST 09-22-81 para. 06] p. 104, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The thoughts and feelings of the mother will have a powerful influence upon the legacy she gives her child. If she allows her mind to dwell upon her own feelings, if she indulges in selfishness, if she is peevish and exacting, the disposition of her child will testify to the fact. Thus many have received as a birthright almost unconquerable tendencies to evil. The enemy of souls understands this matter much better than do many parents. He will bring his temptations to bear upon the mother, knowing that if she does not resist him, he can through her affect her child. The mother's only hope is in God. She may flee to him for strength and grace; and she will not seek in vain. Fathers as well as mothers are involved in this responsibility, and they too should seek earnestly for divine grace, that their influence may be such as God can approve. [Cf: ST 09-22-81 para. 07] p. 104, Para. 5, [1881MS].

It is a deplorable fact that there is a widespread neglect of these precepts of the Bible which have a bearing upon life and health. Many make the subject of temperance a matter of jest. They claim that the Lord does not concern himself with such minor matters as our eating and drinking. But if the Lord had no care for these things, he would not have revealed himself to the wife of Manoah, giving her definite instructions, and twice enjoining upon her to beware lest she disregard

them. Is not this sufficient evidence that he does care for these things? [Cf: ST 09-22-81 para. 08] p. 105, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The inquiry of fathers and mothers should be, "What shall we do unto the child that shall be born unto us?" We have brought before the reader what God has said concerning the course of the mother before the birth of her children. But this is not all. The angel Gabriel was sent from the heavenly courts to give directions for the care of children after their birth, that parents might fully understand their duty. [Cf: ST 09-22-81 para. 09] p. 105, Para. 2, [1881MS].

About the time of Christ's first advent, the angel Gabriel came to Zacharias with a message similar to that given to Manoah. The aged priest was told that his wife should bear a son, whose name should be called John. "And," said the angel, "thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost." This child of promise was to be brought up with strictly temperate habits. An important work of reform was to be committed to him, to prepare the way for Christ. Intemperance in every form existed among the people. Indulgence in wine and luxurious food was lessening physical strength, and debasing the morals to such an extent that the most revolting crimes did not appear sinful. The voice of John was to sound forth from the wilderness in stern rebuke for the sinful indulgences of the people, and his own abstemious habits were also to be a reproof of the excesses of his time. [Cf: ST 09-22-81 para. 10] p. 105, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The efforts of our temperance workers are not sufficiently far-reaching to banish the curse of intemperance from our land. Habits once formed are hard to overcome. The reform should begin with the mother before the birth of her children, and if God's instructions were faithfully obeyed, intemperance would not exist. [Cf: ST 09-22-81 para. 11] p. 105, Para. 4, [1881MS].

It should be the constant effort of every mother to conform her habits to God's will, that she may work in harmony with him to preserve her children from the health and life destroying vices of the present day. Let mothers place themselves without delay in right relations to their Creator, that they may by his assisting grace build around their children a bulwark against dissipation and intemperance. If mothers would but follow such a course, they might see their children, like the youthful Daniel, reach a high standard in moral and intellectual attainments, becoming a blessing to society and an honor to their Creator. [Cf: ST 09-22-81 para. 12] p. 105, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Had parents for years past studied the Scriptures more and the magazines of fashion less, had they realized that their course might determine the destiny of hundreds, and perhaps of thousands, what a different state of society might now exist. We are responsible for the good we might have done, but failed to perform, because by sinful indulgence we placed ourselves in a condition of physical and mental inefficiency. The cause of reform today is suffering for want of men and women of integrity and moral worth. They are needed to advocate by precept and example the principles of self-denial which will be a safeguard to our youth. [Cf: ST 09-22-81 para. 13] p. 105, Para. 6, [1881MS].

Can we look upon the unbelief, intemperance, and crime that seems to be deluging the earth, without feeling our souls stirred to the very depths? Infidelity is rearing its proud head. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." The cry of fathers and mothers and of nations that have forsaken God, and have been forsaken by him, will ere long rend the heavens. What can hinder the crime, what stay the woe that is upon all nations? This evil might have been prevented, had previous generations been trained to fear and love and reverence God. Let us now do what we can individually to bring about these changes. Explicit instructions have been given in the word of God. Let these principles be carried out by the mother, with the cooperation and support of the father, and let children be trained from infancy to habits of self-control. Let them be taught that it is not the object of life to indulge sensual appetites, but to honor God and to bless their fellowmen. [Cf: ST 09-22-81 para. 14] p. 106, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Fathers and mothers, labor earnestly and faithfully, relying on God for grace and wisdom. Be firm and yet mild. In all your commands aim to secure the highest good of your children, and then see that these commands are obeyed. Your energy and decision must be unwavering, yet ever in subjection to the Spirit of Christ. Then indeed may we hope to see "our sons as plants grown up in their youth, and our daughters as cornerstones, polished after the similitude of a palace." By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 09-22-81 para. 15] p. 106, Para. 2, [1881MS].

An important missionary field is opened before the mother. The humble round of duties which women have learned to regard as a wearisome task, should be looked upon as a grand and noble work. It is the mother's privilege to bless the world by her influence; and in doing this, she will bring joy to her own heart. She may make straight paths for the feet of her children, through sunshine and shadow, to the glorious heights above. Let the mother go often to her Saviour, with the prayer, Teach us, how shall we order the child, and what shall we do unto him? This simple petition, breathed from the heart of the finite, will find its way to the heart of the Infinite. If the mother will but heed with care the instructions already given in the sacred word, she will receive further light and knowledge as she shall have need. [Cf: ST 09-29-81 para. 01] p. 106, Para. 3, [1881MS].

It is only when she seeks in her own life to follow the teachings of Christ that the mother can hope to form the characters of her children after the divine pattern. In every generation there have been corrupting influences to blight and contaminate. Fashion and custom exert a strong power over the young. If the mother fails in her duty to instruct, counsel, and restrain, her children will naturally accept the evil and turn from the good. God would have parents enter upon their work with energy and courage, and prosecute it with fidelity. Whatever he has made it their duty to do, he will give them wisdom and strength to accomplish. [Cf: ST 09-29-81 para. 02] p. 106, Para. 4, [1881MS].

While they should, above all else, train their children for the future life, parents should by no means neglect to prepare them for the present life. The mother should study how she may best train her sons and daughters to become useful and happy members of society. She should remember that every habit formed, every thought or feeling cherished, every act performed, however unimportant, will either promote or hinder

the accomplishment of this object. The Lord desires that we should enjoy the blessings with which he has surrounded us, and that in all the acts of our lives we should express our continual gratitude. We can do this, not by neglecting and abusing his gifts, but by putting them to a wise and noble use, by exerting a right influence over our fellow-men, by reforming wrong customs, instead of following them. "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart." It is only in pursuing a right course that light and gladness attend our path. [Cf: ST 09-29-81 para. 03] p. 107, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Society is molded by the influence of the mother. She may be wholly occupied within the narrow limits of her home, apparently engaged in life's humblest duties; yet if she does her work as well as she may do it, in the fear of God, she is gaining greater victories than the leader of armed hosts. She may send forth from her home young men and young women strong in right habits and firm principles. The upright deportment and unblemished morals of her children will be a blessing to the church and to society. [Cf: ST 09-29-81 para. 04] p. 107, Para. 2, [1881MS].

God brought the Israelites from Egypt that he might establish them in the land of Canaan, a pure, holy, and happy people. In the accomplishment of this object he subjected them to a course of discipline, both for their own good and for the good of posterity. Had they been willing to deny appetite, in obedience to his wise restrictions, there would have been no feeble ones in all their tribes. Their descendants would have possessed both physical and mental strength. They would have had clear perceptions of truth and duty, keen discrimination, and sound judgment. But the requirements of God were disregarded then as they are disregarded now. The people were dissatisfied with the simple, wholesome food which had been provided by their Creator. Habits of self-indulgence brought the sure result,-- degeneracy and decay. [Cf: ST 09-29-81 para. 05] p. 107, Para. 3, [1881MS].

God's commands are never designed to make men unhappy. They are the dictates of infinite wisdom, goodness, and love. While they secure the glory of God, they also promote the happiness of men. His restrictions are a safeguard against depravity of heart and corruption of life. The appetites and passions, indulged without restraint, enslave and degrade the higher and nobler powers. [Cf: ST 09-29-81 para. 06] p. 107, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Intemperance in eating and drinking leads to the indulgence of the animal passions. And those who, understanding the effect of their course, indulge appetite and passion at the expense of health and usefulness, are preparing the way to disregard all moral obligations. When temptation assails them, they have little power of resistance. This was the cause of Israel's continual backsliding; and it is the reason why there is so much crime and so little true godliness in the world today. The only path of safety is the path of daily restraint and self-denial. [Cf: ST 09-29-81 para. 07] p. 107, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Nothing but the power of God, combined with human effort, can accomplish the work of ennobling and uplifting our race. Had men been willing to learn the lessons which God had given them, successive generations would not have deteriorated so greatly in physical, mental,

and moral power. Christ, enshrouded in the cloudy pillar, had spoken again and again to Israel for their good; but they had not heeded his voice. Again he appeared to Manoah and his wife with definite instructions concerning the course she should pursue to insure physical and moral health to her offspring. God had a work for the promised child of Manoah to do,--a work which would require careful thought and vigorous action. It was to secure for him the qualities necessary for this work that all his habits were to be carefully regulated. There are today many statesmen, senators, lawyers, judges, and others in responsible positions, whose physical habits have been, nearly all their lifetime, at war with natural laws. At the outset of their career, these men may have possessed rare intellectual powers; but the precious gifts of God have been soiled and dimmed, and in too many cases buried, in the mire of self-indulgence. [Cf: ST 09-29-81 para. 08] p. 108, Para. 1, [1881MS].

He who will observe simplicity in all his habits, restricting the appetite and controlling the passions, may preserve his mental powers strong, active, and vigorous, quick to perceive everything which demands thought or action, keen to discriminate between the holy and the unholy, and ready to engage in every enterprise for the glory of God and the benefit of humanity. [Cf: ST 09-29-81 para. 09] p. 108, Para. 2, [1881MS].

It is the mother's work to train, to educate, and to discipline. While she seeks to store the mind of her child with useful knowledge, let her fortify the young heart with good principles. There is missionary work to be done at home by the fireside. This important field is neglected because of the difficulties to be met; because the work requires labor and self-denial. But will not the result compensate for the sacrifices made, the efforts put forth? Are souls in heathen lands more precious than souls at home? It is indeed a matter which should concern us, that in foreign lands young girls are growing up to wifhood and motherhood knowing nothing of their duties to themselves, to their children, or to God. But should we not at the same time give some thought to the fact that the girls of America are almost wholly destitute of that knowledge and training which would make them useful and honored as wives and mothers? Would that we could lead mothers who are now worshipping at fashion's shrine to become missionaries at home, training their children to become an honor to God and a blessing to humanity. Would not our Maker look upon such a work with approval? [Cf: ST 09-29-81 para. 10] p. 108, Para. 3, [1881MS].

There is a wide field of labor opened before every mother. If her work is wrought faithfully, in the fear of God, it will bring forth fruit unto eternal life. The mother's work should begin at home. This is the fountainhead from which her influence and usefulness should flow. If her duties here are discharged with fidelity, she will see all around her fields where she may work with the best results. And by-and-by those words from her Master will fall as sweetest music upon her ear-- "Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 09-29-81 para. 11] p. 108, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The divine promise to Manoah was in due time fulfilled in the birth of a son, upon whom the name of Samson was bestowed. By the command of the angel no razor was to come upon the child's head, he being consecrated

to God as a Nazarite, from his birth. As the boy grew up, it became evident that he possessed extraordinary physical strength. This was not, however, as Samson and his parents well knew, dependent upon his well-knit sinews, but upon his condition as a Nazarite, of which his unshorn hair was a symbol. [Cf: ST 10-06-81 para. 01] p. 109, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Had Samson as faithfully obeyed the divine command as his parents had done, his would have been a nobler and happier destiny. But he became corrupted by association with idolaters. The inheritance of the tribe of Dan, to which Manoah's family belonged, was adjacent to the country of the Philistines. Indeed, the little town of Zorah, which was Samson's early home, was in close proximity to the dwelling places of this alien race, and in his youth he came to mingle with them on friendly terms. Thus intimacies sprung up, whose evil influences darkened his whole life. [Cf: ST 10-06-81 para. 02] p. 109, Para. 2, [1881MS].

A young woman dwelling in the Philistine town of Timnah so engaged Samson's affections that he determined to make her his wife. In those days marriages were arranged by the parents. Hence Samson requested his father and mother to secure for him this daughter of the Philistines. Manoah and his wife sought to dissuade the young man from his purpose. They warned him of the danger of forming an alliance with idolaters, and besought him to seek a wife among his own people. But arguments and entreaties were alike in vain. His only answer was, "she pleaseth me well." Seeing his determination, the parents decided that the Lord might design thus to accomplish his purposes; hence they yielded to Samson's wishes, and the marriage was consummated. [Cf: ST 10-06-81 para. 03] p. 109, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Thus at the time above all others when he should have maintained entire consecration to the will of God, just as he was entering upon the stage of manhood, the period when he must execute his divine mission,--at this critical point in his life history, Samson yielded to the tempter, and by an unwise marriage placed himself in alliance with the enemies of God. This important step was not carefully considered. Samson did not ask himself whether he could better glorify God when united with the object of his fancy, or whether he was placing himself in a position where he could not fulfill the purpose to be accomplished by his life. To all who seek first to honor him, God has promised wisdom; but there is no promise to those who desire only to please themselves. [Cf: ST 10-06-81 para. 04] p. 109, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The Lord has in his word plainly instructed his people not to unite themselves with those who have not his love and fear before them. Such companions will seldom be satisfied with the love and respect which are justly theirs. They will constantly seek to gain from the God-fearing wife or husband some favor which shall involve a disregard of the divine requirements. To a godly man, and to the church with which he is connected, a worldly wife or a worldly friend is as a spy in the camp, who will watch every opportunity to betray the servant of Christ, and expose him to the enemy's attacks. [Cf: ST 10-06-81 para. 05] p. 109, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Satan is constantly seeking to strengthen his power over the people of God by inducing them to enter into alliance with the hosts of darkness.

And to accomplish this he endeavors to arouse unsanctified passions in the heart which is naturally prone to evil. It is not safe for Christians to imitate the example of the ungodly, or to yield to their influence. The wisest counsels of the wicked are not to be relied upon. If accepted, they may bring trouble and sorrow upon the child of God. The Lord would not have his people take ungodly persons into their confidence. The apostle Paul exhorts us "to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." "For what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" [Cf: ST 10-06-81 para. 06] p. 110, Para. 1, [1881MS].

At his marriage feast Samson was brought into familiar association with those who despised the God of Israel. Whoever voluntarily enters into such relations will feel it necessary to conform, to some degree, to the habits and customs of his companions. The time thus spent with vain and trifling persons is worse than wasted. Thoughts are entertained, words spoken, that weaken the citadel of the soul. [Cf: ST 10-06-81 para. 07] p. 110, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The wife, to obtain whom Samson had transgressed the command of God, proved treacherous to her husband ere the close of the marriage feast, and at last was put to death by the very class whose threats had caused her perfidy. Samson had already given evidence of his prodigious strength, by slaying, single-handed, a young lion, and by killing thirty of the men of Askelon. Now, moved to anger at the barbarous murder of his wife, he attacked the Philistines, "and smote them with great slaughter." Then, wishing a safe retreat from the Philistines, and fearing to trust his own countrymen, he withdrew to a strong rock called Elam, in the tribe of Judah. [Cf: ST 10-06-81 para. 08] p. 110, Para. 3, [1881MS].

To this place he was pursued by a large body of Philistines, whose presence excited great alarm among the inhabitants of Judah. When they learned that the sole object of the invasion was to take Samson captive, they basely agreed to deliver him up to his enemies. In so doing they hoped to secure the favor of the Philistines, and thus lighten their own oppression. Accordingly three thousand men of Judah went up to take the mighty warrior. But even at such odds they dared to make the attempt only because they felt assured that he would not harm his own people. Samson consented to be bound and delivered to the Philistines, but first exacted from the men of Judah a promise not to fall upon him themselves, and thus compel him to destroy them. He permitted them to bind with two new ropes, and to take him down to the Philistines. [Cf: ST 10-06-81 para. 09] p. 110, Para. 4, [1881MS].

He was led into the camp of his enemies amid demonstrations of great joy. But while their shouts were waking the echoes of the hills, the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon Samson. He burst asunder the strong new cords as if they had been flax burned in the fire. Then seizing the first weapon at hand, which though only the jawbone of an ass, was rendered more effective than sword or spear, he smote the Philistines on every side, until they fled in terror, leaving a thousand of their number dead upon the field. [Cf: ST 10-06-81 para. 10] p. 110, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Had the Israelites been prepared to unite with Samson, and follow up

the victory gained, they might at this time have freed themselves from the power of the Philistines. But they had become weak and discouraged. They had basely neglected the work which God had commanded them to perform with diligence, thoroughness, and valor; not only failing to dispossess the heathen, but uniting with them in their degrading practices, tolerating their cruelty, and, so long as it was not directed against themselves, even countenancing their injustice. When at last the tyrant power was triumphant, Israel submitted to the degradation which they might have escaped, had they only obeyed God. Even when the Lord raised up a deliverer for them, they would frequently desert the one chosen to set things in order, and would unite with their bitterest oppressors. [Cf: ST 10-06-81 para. 11] p. 111, Para. 1, [1881MS].

If those who acknowledge God would but obey his voice, how much suffering might be spared them. God's eye is fixed upon every individual, and every one must render an account to him for all they do, and for what they permit themselves to be. Wherever we are, in storehouse and workshop, in all our business, every day in the week, and every hour in the day, his eye scrutinizes all our works, his ear listens to our every word. In the deepest solitude every act and word of our lives has still one witness,--the infinite God. When we are true to the high destiny which he has marked out for us, we become co-laborers with him. If our responsibility be fully and heartily accepted and faithfully discharged, it will secure for us the joyful commendation by the Majesty of Heaven, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." [Cf: ST 10-06-81 para. 12] p. 111, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Thousands of Israelites witnessed Samson's defeat of the Philistines, yet no voice was raised in triumph, till the hero, elated at this marvelous success, celebrated his own victory. But he praised himself, instead of ascribing the glory to God. No sooner had he ceased than he was reminded of his weakness by a most intense and painful thirst. He had become exhausted by his prodigious labors, and no means of supplying his need was at hand. He began to feel his utter dependence upon God, and to be convinced that he had not triumphed by his own power, but in the strength of the Omnipotent One. [Cf: ST 10-06-81 para. 13] p. 111, Para. 3, [1881MS].

He then gave God the praise for his deliverance, and offered an earnest prayer for relief from his present suffering. The Lord hearkened to his petition and opened for him a spring of water. In token of his gratitude Samson called the name of the place En-hakkore, or "the well of him that cried." [Cf: ST 10-06-81 para. 14] p. 111, Para. 4, [1881MS].

After this victory the Israelites made Samson judge over them, and he ruled Israel for twenty years. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 10-06-81 para. 15] p. 111, Para. 5, [1881MS].

One wrong step prepares the way for another. Samson had transgressed the command of God by taking a wife from the daughters of the Philistines, and ere long he ventured again among that people--now his deadly enemies--in the indulgence of his unlawful passions. Trusting confidently to his great strength, which had inspired the Philistines with such terror, he boldly entered Gaza, one of their largest and most

powerful cities, and visited a harlot of that place. [Cf: ST 10-13-81 para. 01] p. 111, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The disgraceful fact was soon made known to the inhabitants of the city, who were eager to be avenged upon their dreaded foe. Fearing to attack him, however, they sent for reinforcements, and kept a vigilant watch at the gate of the city, determined by some means to put him to death in the morning. [Cf: ST 10-13-81 para. 02] p. 112, Para. 1, [1881MS].

At midnight Samson was aroused. The accusing voice of conscience filled him with remorse, as he remembered that he had broken his vow as a Nazarite. But despite his sin, God's mercy had not forsaken him. His great strength again served to deliver him. Wrenching the city gate from its place, he took it entire, with its posts and bars, and carried it several miles, to the top of a hill on the way to Hebron; the guards meanwhile, being too much surprised and terrified to intercept or pursue him. [Cf: ST 10-13-81 para. 03] p. 112, Para. 2, [1881MS].

But even this narrow escape did not serve to stay him in his evil course. The third step downward soon followed the second. He did not again venture into the territory of the Philistines, but sought at home those sensuous pleasures that were luring him on to ruin. "He loved a woman in the vale of Serek." Her name was Delilah, which fitly signifies consuming, or wasting. In the society of this enchantress, the judge of Israel squandered precious hours that should have been sacredly devoted to the welfare of his people. But the blinding passions which make even the strongest weak, had gained control of reason and of conscience. The vale of Serek, a little valley not far from his own birthplace, was celebrated for its vineyards. These also had a temptation for the wavering Nazarite, who had already indulged in the use of wine, thus breaking another tie that bound him to temperance, to purity, and to God. [Cf: ST 10-13-81 para. 04] p. 112, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The Philistines were well acquainted with the divine law, and its condemnation of sensual indulgence. They kept a vigilant watch over all the movements of their enemy, and when he degraded himself by this new attachment, and they saw the bewitching power of the enchantress, they determined, through her, to accomplish his ruin. [Cf: ST 10-13-81 para. 05] p. 112, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Accordingly, a deputation consisting of one leading man from each of the five Philistine States was sent to the vale of Serek. It was not their purpose to seize him while in possession of his great strength, but to learn if possible some means by which that strength might be taken away. Such marvelous power, far exceeding anything which they had ever known before; that of the famed descendants of Anak, who dwelt among them, could not be compared with it, and the Philistine lords decided that it must be supernatural, the result of some condition that might be changed, or some charm that might be broken. They therefore bribed Delilah to discover the secret of his strength, and reveal it to them, offering her eleven hundred shekels of silver from each of their number, aggregating a sum of more than three thousand dollars. [Cf: ST 10-13-81 para. 06] p. 112, Para. 5, [1881MS].

As the betrayer plied Samson with her questions, he deceived her by

declaring that the weakness of other men would come upon him if certain processes were tried. When she put the matter to the test, the imposition was discovered. Then she accused him of falsehood, saying, "How canst thou say thou lovest me, when thou hast deceived me and lied to me these three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great strength lieth?" [Cf: ST 10-13-81 para. 07] p. 113, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Samson's infatuation seems almost incredible. At first he was not so wholly enthralled as to reveal the secret; but he had deliberately walked into the net of the betrayer of souls, and its meshes were drawing closer about him at every step. Three times he had the clearest evidence that the Philistines had leagued with his charmer to destroy him; but when her purpose failed and his strength returned, she had treated the matter as a jest, and he blindly banished all fear of danger. [Cf: ST 10-13-81 para. 08] p. 113, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Day by day Delilah pressed and urged him, until "his soul was vexed unto death," yet a subtle power kept him by her side. Her heart was set upon the tempting bribe, and she exerted all her blandishments to secure it. Overcome at last by the bewitching spell which he seemed to have no power to break, Samson made known the secret: "There hath not come a razor upon mine head; for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my birth. If I be shaven then my strength will go from me, and I will become weak and be like any other man." [Cf: ST 10-13-81 para. 09] p. 113, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Eagerly the betrayer listened to his words, fully convinced by his serious and earnest manner that he had told truth; and she determined to profit by it. A messenger was immediately dispatched to the lords of the Philistines, urging them to come once more to her chamber without delay. She next sent for a man who, while the warrior slept with his head upon her knees, shaved off the heavy masses of his hair. Then, as she had done three times before, she called, "The Philistines be upon thee, Samson!" Suddenly awaking, he thought to exert his strength as before, and destroy them all; but his powerless arms refused to do his bidding, and then he knew that the Lord had departed from him. [Cf: ST 10-13-81 para. 10] p. 113, Para. 4, [1881MS].

When he had been shaven, Delilah began to annoy him and cause him pain, thus making a trial of his strength; for the Philistines dared not approach him till fully convinced that his power was gone. Then they seized him, and having put out both his eyes, they took him to Gaza. Here he was bound with strong fetters of brass, and kept in their prison house as a trophy of their victory, and compelled to drudge in hard labor. [Cf: ST 10-13-81 para. 11] p. 113, Para. 5, [1881MS].

What a change to him that had been the judge and champion of Israel! - now weak, blind, imprisoned, degraded to the most menial service! Little by little he had violated the conditions of his sacred calling. God had borne long with him, but when he had so yielded himself to the power of sin as to betray his secret, that moment God departed from him. There was no virtue in the length of his hair, in itself, but it was a token of his loyalty to God, and when the symbol was sacrificed in the indulgence of lustful passion, the blessings of which it was a token were also forfeited. Had Samson's head been shaven without fault on his part, his strength would have remained. But his course had shown contempt for the favor and authority of God as much as if he had in

disdain himself severed his locks from his head. Therefore God left him to endure the results of his own folly. [Cf: ST 10-13-81 para. 12] p. 113, Para. 6, [1881MS].

In his sufferings and humiliation, a sport for the Philistines, Samson had opportunity for reflection, and he learned more of his own weakness than he had ever known before. As his afflictions led him to repentance, his hair began gradually to grow, indicating the return of his extraordinary powers, but his enemies, regarding him only as a fettered and helpless prisoner, felt no apprehensions. [Cf: ST 10-13-81 para. 13] p. 114, Para. 1, [1881MS].

As the Philistines exulted over their great victory, they ascribed the honor to their gods, praising them as superior to the God of Israel. The contest, instead of being between Samson and the Philistines, was now between Jehovah and Dagon, and thus the Lord was moved to assert his almighty power and his supreme authority. A favorable opportunity for this was soon presented. The Philistines held a feast in honor of their God Dagon. A vast company was assembled, and in the height of their sacrilegious festivities, they ordered the captive to be produced, that the people might have a new source of amusement. The multitude greeted his appearance with shouts of triumph, and praised their god who had thus subdued the "destroyer of their country." Samson had been made the sport of the people before; But now even the rulers of the nation mocked at his misery. [Cf: ST 10-13-81 para. 14] p. 114, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The immense building was thronged with the brave and the fair. Even the roof was crowded with thousands of spectators. After a time, as if weary, Samson asked permission to rest against the two central pillars which supported the temple roof. Then he breathed the prayer, "O Lord Jehovah, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, that I may be avenged on the Philistines for my two eyes." With these words he seized the pillars in his mighty arms, and with the cry, "Let me die with the Philistines," he bowed himself and the roof fell, destroying at one dread crash, all that vast company. "So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life." [Cf: ST 10-13-81 para. 15] p. 114, Para. 3, [1881MS].

God designed that Samson should accomplish a great work for Israel. Hence the utmost care had been taken at the very outset of life to surround him with the most favorable conditions for physical strength, intellectual vigor, and moral purity. Had he not in after years ventured among the ungodly and the licentious, he would not so basely have yielded to temptation. Physically he was the strongest man upon the earth; but in self-control, integrity, and firmness, he was the weakest of men. His passions were not held in subjection to reason and the fear of God. The blandishments of beautiful women often have dangerous temptations to the young. Those who do not make God their strength will be overcome by Satan's devices. [Cf: ST 10-13-81 para. 16] p. 114, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The very men whom God purposes to use as his servants, the dread adversary uses his utmost power to lead astray. Yet the sacred word presents for our encouragement noble examples of men who have in the strength of God resisted the fiercest attacks of the powers of darkness. The youthful Joseph was subjected to a most severe

temptation. It came from one in high position, one whose enmity might destroy his worldly prospects. The future of Joseph's life was determined by the decisions made in that trying hour. He calmly looked up to Heaven, and exclaimed, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" The fires of unholy passion were not permitted to kindle. God's commands, God's promise were before Joseph. He felt that the all-seeing eye was upon him, extending to all his thoughts, penetrating to the secrets of the heart, to the motives underlying every action. [Cf: ST 10-13-81 para. 17] p. 115, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Samson in his peril had the same source of strength as had Joseph. He could choose the right or the wrong as he pleased. But instead of taking hold of the strength of God, he permitted the wild passions of his nature to have full sway. The reasoning powers were perverted, the morals corrupted. God had called Samson to a position of great responsibility, honor, and usefulness; but he must first learn to govern by first learning to obey the laws of God. Joseph was a free moral agent. Good and evil were before him. He could choose the path of purity, holiness, and honor, or the path of immorality and degradation. He chose the right way, and God approved. Samson, under similar temptations, which he had brought upon himself, gave loose rein to passion. The path which he entered upon he found to end in shame, disaster, and death. What a contrast to the history of Joseph! [Cf: ST 10-13-81 para. 18] p. 115, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The youths of today can bless or blight their future life. God calls young men in the strength and glory of their manhood to do service for him. But many whom God could use refuse to obey. They desire to secure worldly gain and worldly honor. To become a servant of Christ they consider as requiring too great a sacrifice. [Cf: ST 10-13-81 para. 19] p. 115, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The history of Samson conveys a lesson for those whose characters are yet unformed, who have not yet entered upon the stage of active life. The youth who enter our schools and colleges will find there every class of mind. If they desire sport and folly, if they seek to shun the good and unite with the evil, they have the opportunity. Sin and righteousness are before them, and they are to choose for themselves. But let them remember that "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption: but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 10-13-81 para. 20] p. 115, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The reign of judges in Israel closes with Samuel, than whom few purer or more illustrious characters are presented in the sacred record. There are few, also whose life history contains lessons of greater value to the thoughtful student. The father of Samuel was Elkanah, a Levite, who dwelt at Ramah, in Mount Ephraim. He was a person of wealth and influence, a kind husband, and a man who feared and revered God. Hannah, the wife of Elkanah, was a woman of piety and devotion. Humility, conscientiousness, and a firm reliance upon God, were ruling traits in her character. Of Hannah it might truly be said, in the words of the wise man: "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her." [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 01] p. 115, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Elkanah's love for his chosen companion was deep and unchanging; yet a

cloud shadowed their domestic happiness. The home was not made joyful by the voice of childhood. At length the strong desire to perpetuate his name led the husband, as it had led many others, to adopt a course which God did not sanction--that of introducing into the family a second wife, to be subordinate to the first. This act was prompted by a lack of faith in God, and was attended with evil results. The peace of the hitherto united and harmonious family was broken. Upon Hannah the blow fell with crushing weight. All happiness seemed forever swept away from her life. She bore her trials uncomplainingly, yet her grief was none the less keen and bitter. [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 02] p. 116, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Peninnah, the new wife, was a woman of inferior mind, and of envious and jealous disposition. As years passed on, and sons and daughters were added to the household, she became proud and self-important, and treated her rival with contempt and insolence. [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 03] p. 116, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Elkanah faithfully observed the ordinances of God. The worship at Shiloh was still maintained, yet it had become irregular, and in some respects incomplete. Hence, Elkanah had no regular employment at the tabernacle, to whose service, being a Levite, he was to be especially devoted. Notwithstanding this, his zeal in the service of God was unflinching. With his family he went up to Shiloh to worship and sacrifice at the appointed gatherings. [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 04] p. 116, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Yet even amid the sacred festivities connected with the worship of God, the evil spirit that had cursed his home intruded. After the other sacrifices had been made, it was customary for the peace offering to be presented. A specified portion of this was given to the priest, and then the offerer, after distributing to each member of his family a share of the remainder, united with them in a solemn yet joyous feast. Upon these occasions. Elkanah gave the mother of his children a portion for herself and for each of her sons and daughters, and then as a token of regard for Hannah, his first and best-loved wife, he gave her a double portion. This excited the envy and jealousy of the second wife, and she boldly asserted her claims to superiority as one highly favored of God; and she tauntingly pointed to the fact that Hannah had no children, as proof of the Lord's displeasure toward her. [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 05] p. 116, Para. 4, [1881MS].

This scene was enacted again and again, not only at the yearly gatherings, but whenever circumstances furnished an opportunity for Peninnah to exalt herself at the expense of her rival. The course of this woman seemed to Hannah, a trial almost beyond endurance. Satan employed her as his agent to harass, and if possible exasperate and destroy one of God's faithful children. At last, as her enemy's taunts were repeated at one of the yearly feasts, Hannah's courage and fortitude gave way. Unable longer to conceal her feelings, she wept without restraint. The expressions of joy on every hand seemed mockery to her. She could not partake of the feast. [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 06] p. 116, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Her husband, knowing the cause of her grief, sought to comfort her with the assurance of his unchanged affection, and gently chides her for yielding thus to sorrow: "Why weepest thou? and why eatest thou

not? and why is thy heart grieved? am not I better to thee than ten sons?" But it was impossible for Elkanah fully to understand her feelings or to appreciate the cause. [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 07] p. 117, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Hannah brought no reproach against her husband for his unwise marriage. The grief which she could share with no earthly friend, she carried to her Heavenly Father, and sought consolation from Him alone who hath said, "Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee." There is a mighty power in prayer. Our great adversary is constantly seeking to keep the troubled soul away from God. An appeal to Heaven by the humblest saint is more to be dreaded by Satan than the decrees of cabinets or the mandates of kings. [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 08] p. 117, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Hannah's prayer was unheard by mortal ear, but entered the ear of the Lord of hosts. Earnestly she pleaded that God would take away her reproach, and grant her the boon most highly prized by women of that age,--the blessing of motherhood. As she wrestled in prayer, her voice uttered no sound, but her lips moved and her countenance gave evidence of deep emotion. And now another trial awaited the humble suppliant. As the eye of Eli the high priest fell upon her, he hastily decided that she was intoxicated. Feasting revelry had well-nigh supplanted true godliness among the people of Israel. Instances of intemperance, even among women, were of frequent occurrence, and now Eli determined to administer what he considered a deserved rebuke. "How long wilt thou be drunken? Put away thy wine from thee." [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 09] p. 117, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Hannah had been communing with God. She believed that her prayer had been heard, and the peace of Christ filled her heart. Hers was a gentle, sensitive nature, yet she yielded neither to grief nor to indignation at the unjust charge of drunkenness in the house of God. With due reverence for the anointed of the Lord, she calmly repelled the accusation and stated the cause of her emotion. "No my Lord, I am a woman of sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord. Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial, for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto." Convinced that his reproof had been unjust, Eli replied, "Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him." [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 10] p. 117, Para. 4, [1881MS].

In her prayer, Hannah had made a vow that if her request were granted, she would dedicate her child to the service of God. This vow she made known to her husband, and he confirmed it in a solemn act of worship, before leaving Shiloh. [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 11] p. 117, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Hannah's prayer was answered, and she received the gift for which she had so earnestly entreated. As she looked upon the pledge of divine favor she called the child Samuel--Asked of God. [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 12] p. 117, Para. 6, [1881MS].

As soon as the little one was old enough to be separated from its mother, she fulfilled her solemn vow. She love her child with all the devotion of a mother's heart; day by day her affections entwined about

him more closely as she watched his expanding powers, and listened to the childish prattle; He was her only son, the especial gift of Heaven; but she had received him as a treasure consecrated to God, and she would not withhold from the Giver his own. Faith strengthened the mother's heart, and she yielded not to the pleadings of natural affection. [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 13] p. 118, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Once more Hannah journeyed with her husband to Shiloh, taking the child to present him unto the Lord, and bearing also gifts for sacrifice and thank offering. Reaching the tabernacle, she sought the presence of the high priest. He did not recognize her. There was indeed a striking contrast between the pallid, grief-stricken suppliant and the grateful, happy mother. Hannah related the circumstances of her previous interview, and then presented to the priest, in the name of God, her precious gift, saying: "For this child I prayed, and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him. Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord. As long as he liveth, he shall be lent to the Lord." Eli was surprised and deeply impressed by the faith and devotion of this woman of Israel. Himself an over-indulgent father, he was awed and humbled as he beheld this mother's great sacrifice in parting with her first and only child, that she might devote him to the service of God. He felt reprov'd for his own selfish love, and in humiliation and reverence he bowed before the Lord and worshiped. [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 14] p. 118, Para. 2, [1881MS].

God had granted Hannah the desire of her heart; she had been highly favored of Heaven, and she felt that she could do no less in token of her gratitude than to make a public acknowledgment of the divine mercy and lovingkindness. The spirit of inspiration came upon her, and although a retiring and timid woman, her voice was now heard in the assembly of the people, sounding forth the praise of God:-- [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 15] p. 118, Para. 3, [1881MS].

"My heart rejoiceth in the Lord; mine horn is exalted in the Lord. My mouth is enlarged over mine enemies, because I rejoice in thy salvation." The horn is in some animals the weapon of attack and defense; by the use of this figure, Hannah would acknowledge that her deliverance had come from God. In her exultation, there is no vain triumph of self. She rejoices not in Samuel, not in her own prosperity, but in the Lord. The song continues: "There is none holy as the Lord; for there is none beside thee; neither is there any rock like our God." She extols the perfection of Deity. In the character of God, are wisdom, purity, truth, goodness, and mercy combined, immutable and complete. All human holiness is mingled with imperfection. All idols of the nations are vain and worthless. God is our only refuge and support; and those who trust in him will never be confounded. [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 16] p. 118, Para. 4, [1881MS].

"Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth; for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed." While here referring to Peninnah's boastful and insolent conduct, Hannah seems also to speak to all the enemies of true godliness, who glory in themselves, and insult and despise the children of faith. Pride and boasting cannot deceive God. He is acquainted with the hearts and the lives of all. By him actions are weighed. He distinguishes men's characters, and weighs their motives in the balance. When he sees that it will be for the good of man and for his

own glory, he will interpose in behalf of his people. In due time he will reward the righteous and punish the wicked. [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 17] p. 118, Para. 5, [1881MS].

"The bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength. They that were full have hired out themselves for bread, and they that were hungry ceased. How often, even in this life, do we see the ungodly brought to shame and confusion. Do they aspire to distinction and worldly honor? Are they proud of their valor and military skill? Their bows are broken, and they themselves overcome by a weak and despised company; for God hath girded the stumbling ones with strength. Do they trust in their riches, and indulge in luxury and extravagance while trampling upon the rights of the poor? They may themselves meet with reverses, and be reduced to the necessity of toiling for bread to satisfy their hunger, while many who have endured hardship and privation are blessed with plenty. [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 18] p. 119, Para. 1, [1881MS].

"The Lord killeth, and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich; he bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory, for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them. He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them. The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed." [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 19] p. 119, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Hannah's words were prophetic, both of David, who should reign as king of Israel, and of Christ, the Messiah, the Lord's anointed. Thus in a sublime and sacred song, referring first to the proud boastings of an insolent and contentious woman, were ultimately set forth, the humiliation of the proud and exaltation of the humble, the destruction of the enemies of God, and the complete and final triumph of his faithful servants. [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 20] p. 119, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Having given utterance to this triumphant burst of praise, Hannah quietly returned to her home at Ramah, leaving the child Samuel to minister in the house of God, under the care and instruction of Eli, the high priest. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 10-27-81 para. 21] p. 119, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The fulfillment of Hannah's vow to dedicate her child to the Lord, was not deferred until he could be presented at the tabernacle. From the earliest dawn of intellect she trained his infant mind to love and reverence God, and to regard himself as the Lord's. By every familiar object surrounding him she sought to lead his thoughts up to the Creator. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 01] p. 119, Para. 5, [1881MS].

When separated from her child, the faithful mother's solicitude did not cease. He was the subject of her prayers. Every year she made him a little coat, and when she came with her husband to the yearly sacrifice, she presented it to the child as a token of her love. With

every stitch of that coat she had breathed a prayer that he might be pure, noble, and true. She did not ask that he might be great, but earnestly pleaded that he might be good. Her faith and devotion were rewarded. She saw her son, in the simplicity of childhood, walking in the love and fear of God. She saw him growing up to manhood in favor with God and man, humble, reverent, prompt in duty, and earnest in the service of his divine Master. And while the Lord accepted the precious offering from that mother's hand, he did not forget to repay the sacrifice. Hannah was blessed with other children, to educate and train for Heaven. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 02] p. 119, Para. 6, [1881MS].

Samuel's youth was passed in the tabernacle solemnly devoted to the worship of God; yet even here he was not free from evil influences or sinful example. The sons of Eli are described in the sacred word as "sons of Belial." They feared not God, nor honored their father; but Samuel did not seek their company nor follow their evil ways. It was his constant effort to make himself what God would have him to become. This is the privilege of every youth. God is pleased when even little children devote themselves to his service; they should not be discouraged in their efforts to become Christians. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 03] p. 120, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The youth will not become weak-minded or inefficient by consecrating themselves to the service of God. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The youngest child that loves and fears God, is greater in his sight than the most talented and learned man who neglects the great salvation. The youth who consecrate their hearts and lives to God, have in so doing, placed themselves in connection with the Fountain of all wisdom and excellence. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 04] p. 120, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Early brought to minister in the tabernacle, Samuel had even then minor duties to perform in the service of God, according to his capacity. These were at first very humble, and not always pleasant, but they were performed to the best of his ability, and with a willing heart. His religion was carried into all the business of life. He regarded himself as God's servant, and his work as God's work. His efforts were accepted, because they were prompted by love to God and a sincere desire to do his will. Thus Samuel became a co-worker with the Lord of Heaven and earth. And God through him accomplished a great work for Israel. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 05] p. 120, Para. 3, [1881MS].

If children were taught to regard the humble round of everyday duties as the course marked out for them by the Lord, as a school in which they were to be trained to render faithful and efficient service, how much more pleasant and honorable would their work appear. To perform every duty as unto the Lord, throws a charm around the humblest employment, and links the workers on earth with the holy beings who do God's will in Heaven. And in our appointed place we should discharge our duties with as much faithfulness as do the angels in their higher sphere. Those who feel that they are God's servants will be men who can be trusted anywhere. Citizens of Heaven will make the best citizens of earth. A correct view of our duty to God leads to clear perceptions of our duty to our fellow men. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 06] p. 120, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Parents should bring up their children in the love and fear of God,

remembering that they are younger members of the Lord's great family entrusted to the parents to be educated and trained for Heaven, and to be required again at their hands. Let children be taught that every act of life is important. It is strengthening habit and forming character. If all the daily duties are performed in the fear of God, they will be done with fidelity, and the life record will be such as can pass the test of the Judgment. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 07] p. 121, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Would that every mother could realize how great are her duties and her responsibilities, and how great will be the reward of faithfulness. The mother's daily influence upon her children is preparing them for everlasting life or eternal death. She exercises in her home a power more decisive than the minister in the desk, or even the king upon his throne. The day of God will reveal how much the world owes to godly mothers for men who have been unflinching advocates of truth and reform,--men who have been bold to do and dare, who have stood unshaken amid trials and temptations; men who chose the high and holy interests of truth and the glory of God, before worldly honor or life itself. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 08] p. 121, Para. 2, [1881MS].

When the Judgment shall sit, and the books shall be opened; when the "well done" of the great Judge is pronounced, and the crown of immortal glory is placed upon the brow of the victor, many will raise their crowns in sight of the assembled universe, and pointing to their mother say, "She made me all I am through the grace of God. Her instruction, her prayers, have been blessed to my eternal salvation." [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 09] p. 121, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Samuel became a great man in the fullest sense, as God estimates character. Many whom the world calls great, fall far below the divine standard. They lack the very elements of true and noble manhood. Men of giant intellect and brilliant genius, men before whom the world bows in willing homage, have prostituted these precious gifts of God to the service of the archdeceiver. The name of Byron stands high in the literary world. God gave him great natural abilities; had his powers been rightly directed, he might have been a blessing to society. But his talents were not consecrated to God. The purity of Heaven did not permeate his life or breathe forth in his literary productions. Many of his works lead to immorality and irreligion. They reveal the true character of the man--corrupt in taste, depraved in heart. He rejected the service of God, and chose to ally himself to Satan. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 10] p. 121, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Gibbon, the renowned historian, was not a great man according to God's standard. He was endowed with great intellectual powers, that he might make known to his fellow-men the knowledge of God. But Satan prepared his snares for this man, and he became entangled in the meshes of skepticism. His works breathe insinuations against God and against the world's Redeemer. He improved every opportunity to destroy confidence in the Bible and the Christian religion. Eternity alone can reveal the amount of harm wrought by his writings. The world pronounces Gibbon a literary success. God pronounces him a failure. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 11] p. 121, Para. 5, [1881MS].

A beneficent Creator endows men with intellectual powers, that, consecrated to his service, they may become co-workers with Christ and

angels in the work of human redemption. Yet how many, like Byron and Gibbon, employ their talents to pervert the simplicity of truth, and bring contempt upon the Christian religion, as unworthy the attention of intelligent men. Those who are engaged in this work little know what they are doing. But in the day of Judgment how fearful will be their accountability. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 12] p. 122, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Intellectual power, when opposed to the principles of true religion, becomes a minister of vice. Its influence tends to deface the image of God in man, and to bring him down to the level of the brute creation. Whatever, tends to banish thoughts of God from the mind becomes a curse, not only to the possessor but to all within the sphere of his influence. Better would it be for the gifted skeptic, better for the world, to be deprived of the brilliant talents that are devoted to the service of Satan. The greater the gift perverted and abused, the greater will be the evil wrought and the greater the condemnation in the day of final reckoning. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 13] p. 122, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Despite the many sovereigns to whom men profess allegiance, all mankind are serving one of two masters--the Prince of light or the Prince of darkness. Samuel served the former, the sons of Eli the latter. The characters of these persons, standing out in such striking contrast, represent the two great parties into which the world has been divided since the fall of Adam--the servants of Christ and the servants of Satan. God has ordained that with families and nations or with individuals, virtue is the basis of happiness, vice the foundation of woe and misery. In all the history of nations, wherever righteousness has been cherished, union, peace, and prosperity result; where greed, selfishness, and irreligion reign, weakness, degeneracy, and corruption follow. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 14] p. 122, Para. 3, [1881MS].

A constant warfare is still waged between vice and virtue. Wherever we turn, the battle goes on unceasingly. Infidelity is rearing its head in vaunted triumph, and crime of all grades is crowding in on every side. Multitudes of the youth are swept away by the overwhelming tide of evil. In every earnest Christian heart the question rises, "Why, oh, why, in a land of Bibles and Christian teaching, can the adversary of souls exert over our youth a power so mighty, so unrestrained?" The reason is apparent. Parents are neglecting their solemn responsibility. They are not earnest, persevering, and faithful in the work of training their children for God, restraining their evil desires and enforcing obedience to parental authority, even in infancy. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 15] p. 122, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Young men should be trained to stand firm for the right amid the prevailing iniquity, to do all in their power to arrest the progress of vice, and to promote virtue, purity, and true manliness. The impressions made upon the mind and character in early life are deep and abiding. Injudicious training or evil associations will often exert upon the young mind an influence for evil that all after-effort is powerless to efface. The character of Napoleon Bonaparte was greatly influenced by his training in childhood. Unwise instructors inspired him with a love for conquest, forming mimic armies and placing him at their head as commander. Here was laid the foundation for his career of strife and bloodshed. Had the same care and effort been directed to making him a good man, imbuing his young heart with the spirit of the

gospel, how widely different might have been his history. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 16] p. 122, Para. 5, [1881MS].

It is said that Hume the skeptic was in early life a conscientious believer in the word of God. Being connected with a debating society, he was appointed to present the arguments in favor of infidelity. He studied with earnestness and perseverance, and his keen and active mind became imbued with the sophistry of skepticism. Ere long he came to believe its delusive teachings, and his whole afterlife bore the dark impress of infidelity. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 17] p. 123, Para. 1, [1881MS].

When Voltaire was five years old, he committed to memory an infidel poem, and the pernicious influence was never effaced from his mind. He became one of Satan's most successful agents to lead men away from God. Thousands will rise up in the Judgment, and charge the ruin of their souls upon the infidel Voltaire. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 18] p. 123, Para. 2, [1881MS].

By the thoughts and feelings cherished in early years, every youth is determining his own life history. Correct, virtuous, manly habits formed in youth will become a part of the character, and will usually mark the course of the individual through life. The youth may become vicious or virtuous, as they choose. They may as well be distinguished for true and noble deeds as for great crime and wickedness. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 19] p. 123, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Young men of today may become as precious in the sight of the Lord as was Samuel. They may have their names enrolled in the book of life, to be looked upon with pleasure by the Monarch of the universe and the angelic host. By faithfully maintaining their Christian integrity, the young may, like the noble Luther, exert a mighty influence in the work of reform. Such men are needed at this time. God has a position and a work for every one of them. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 20] p. 123, Para. 4, [1881MS].

If the young men in our cities would unite their efforts to discountenance ungodliness and crime, their influence would greatly advance the cause of reform. It is the privilege and the duty of every youth, as an angel of mercy, to minister to the wants and woes of mankind. There is no class that can achieve greater results for God and humanity than the young. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 21] p. 123, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Let none entertain the thought that the religion of the Bible is weak and unmanly, the effect of fanatical zeal or superstitious fear. Many of the young refrain from entering the service of Christ because they are unwilling to confess themselves Christians before the world. They are ashamed of Jesus, ashamed to acknowledge and obey his authority. Such persons view religion from the worldling's standpoint. On this rock thousands have been wrecked. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 22] p. 123, Para. 6, [1881MS].

God is the sovereign of the universe, and should we be ashamed to acknowledge our allegiance to him? The holy angels are engaged night and day in his service. The highest order of beings in all the universe bow before the throne of God with songs of grateful, joyous praise. Is

there aught in such service that can detract from man's true dignity? Saith the Lord, "Them that honor me I will honor." The service of God is the highest, noblest work that can engage the powers of men or of angels. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 11-03-81 para. 23] p. 123, Para. 7, [1881MS].

The history of Samuel, the pure, noble-hearted prophet, and of Moses, the holiest of men, the most illustrious of leaders, shows how great is the mother's power to mold the character of her child, even in its earliest years. During this period her influence is paramount to all other. Even the infant in her arms will catch her spirit, and copy her deportment. It is important that mothers understand their duty, and that they seek wisdom and grace from God to perform their sacred work to his acceptance. [Cf: ST 11-10-81 para. 01] p. 124, Para. 1, [1881MS].

But great as is the work of the mother, it should never be forgotten that the father also has a part to act in the education and training of his children, and that he is under the most solemn obligation to perform that work with fidelity. Especially as the children advance in years is the father's influence needed, in union with that of the mother, to restrain, control, and guide. Parents little realize the harm done by withholding from their children needed and wholesome restraint, and allowing them to grow up with uncontrolled passions, and selfish, debasing habits. [Cf: ST 11-10-81 para. 02] p. 124, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The course of Eli--his sinful indulgence as a father, and his criminal neglect as a priest of God--presents a striking and painful contrast to the firmness and self-denial of the faithful Hannah. Eli was acquainted with the divine will. He knew what characters God could accept, and what he would condemn. Yet he suffered his children to grow up with unbridled passions, perverted appetites, and corrupt morals. [Cf: ST 11-10-81 para. 03] p. 124, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Eli had instructed his children in the law of God, and had given them a good example in his own life; but this was not his whole duty. God required him, both as a father and as a priest, to restrain them from following their own perverse will. This he had failed to do. His sons were impatient of control, and he weakly resigned the reins to them, and suffered them to pursue their evil ways at pleasure. The fond father overlooked the faults and sins of their childhood, flattering himself that after a time they would outgrow these evil tendencies. He did not regard his children as a sacred trust which God had committed to his care, to be returned with interest; but he looked upon them as his own. Hence, instead of seeking guidance and help from God, and following the instructions given in his word, Eli chose his own way of management, that most agreeable to his ease-loving disposition. Had he taught his sons to obey their father, they would have learned to obey God; but by permitting them to disregard his commands, he taught them to disregard the commands of their heavenly Father. Thus their evil habits strengthened with their years, and when they reached manhood, they were ready to defy all authority, both human and divine. [Cf: ST 11-10-81 para. 04] p. 124, Para. 4, [1881MS].

God requires every parent not only to give his children right instruction and a good example, but with promptness and decision to

restrain their inclination to do evil. The fact that Eli stood in holy office, cause his lax discipline, and the selfish, irreverent, licentious course of his wicked sons, to exert a corrupting influence upon the whole nation. All parents should strive to make their families patterns of good works, perfect Christian households. But in a pre-eminent degree is this the duty of those who minister in sacred things, and to whom the people look for instruction and guidance. The ministers of Christ are to be examples to the flock. He who fails to direct wisely his own household, is not qualified to guide the church of God. [Cf: ST 11-10-81 para. 05] p. 124, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Christian parents, if you desire to work for the Lord, begin with your little ones at home. If you manifest tact and wisdom and the fear of God in the management of your children, you may be intrusted with greater responsibilities. True Christian effort will begin at home, and go out from the center to embrace wider fields. A soul saved in your own family circle or in your own neighborhood, by your patient, painstaking labor, will bring as much honor to the name of Christ, and will shine as brightly in your crown as if you had found that soul in China or India. [Cf: ST 11-10-81 para. 06] p. 125, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The Lord will not pass unpunished the neglect of parents to train their children for his service. By kind and judicious management, fathers as well as mothers should bind their children to them by the strong ties of reverence, gratitude, and love, and should kindle in their young hearts an earnest longing for righteousness and truth. While the mother seeks to implant good principles, the father should see that the precious seed is not choked by the growth of evil. His sterner discipline is needed that his children may learn firmness and self-control amid the allurements to sin which must be on every hand. [Cf: ST 11-10-81 para. 07] p. 125, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Let parents beware how they undervalue or neglect their work. Great is the reward of fidelity, terrible the penalty of unfaithfulness. One child wisely educated--trained to love and practice the right because it is right, may impart to thousands the blessings which he has received. Through his influence and example, the lessons of uprightness, purity, and devotion that shaped his own character, are permitted to shed their precious light far and wide. [Cf: ST 11-10-81 para. 08] p. 125, Para. 3, [1881MS].

How many faithful and honored workers for God and humanity have been given to the world as the fruit of a godly training in childhood. It was said of Timothy, the beloved co-laborer with Paul, that he knew the holy Scriptures from a child, and that the faith which dwelt in his mother and grandmother, was revealed also in him. The influence of faithful Christian parents can never lose its power. A young man when about to be ordained as a Christian minister, stated that at one time he had been well-nigh led to adopt the principles of infidelity. "But," he added, "there was one argument in favor of Christianity which I could never forget, and that was the consistent conduct of my own father. Through that I was at length won to the Saviour." [Cf: ST 11-10-81 para. 09] p. 125, Para. 4, [1881MS].

By neglect of duty, parents exert a far-reaching influence for evil. One ungodly, disobedient son, may lead many souls in the path of iniquity. Each of these will corrupt others; the evil traits cherished

will be transmitted to posterity; and thus iniquity is constantly increasing and multiplying, and all because parents choose the way which is easiest at the moment, the way of gratification and indulgence, and look not to the misery in store for themselves, their children, and their children's children. [Cf: ST 11-10-81 para. 10] p. 125, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The solemn warnings contained in the word of God, the judgments visited upon the indulgent father, and his rebellious sons, should arouse parents from their stupor, and lead them to see and feel their duty to give to their children, by right education and discipline, correct habits and sound principles. Christian father, labor kindly, patiently, for the welfare of your children. Seek to turn their hearts to the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. Teach them by precept and example, that the spirit of Christ is the spirit of doing good. [Cf: ST 11-10-81 para. 11] p. 126, Para. 1, [1881MS].

To every father and mother is committed a little plot of ground before their own door. It is their work to clear it from noxious weeds, and to mellow the soil that the precious seed may take root and flourish there. To do their work faithfully will be far more pleasing to God than to go on a mission to some foreign land, leaving the home field neglected. The work of Christian ministers and parents, should begin with their own children. Present to the church and to the world a well-disciplined family, and you present one of the strongest arguments in favor of Christianity. [Cf: ST 11-10-81 para. 12] p. 126, Para. 2, [1881MS].

If parents who are following Eli's example of neglect could see the result of the education they are giving their children, they would feel that the curse which fell on Eli would assuredly fall on them. The sin of rebellion against parental authority, lies at the very foundation of the misery and crime in the world today. In his holy law God himself speaks to children: "Honor thy father and thy mother." Again, by the pen of an apostle he commands them, "Children, obey your parents." The Old and the New Testament alike teach respect and obedience to parents, and also admonish all to reverence and honor the aged, to tenderly protect and cherish those whose heads are white, and whose steps are feeble. If children were trained according to the teachings of God's word, they would manifest a deference for superiors, a propriety of deportment, and a beauty of character that would make them beloved by their associates, and beloved of God. [Cf: ST 11-10-81 para. 13] p. 126, Para. 3, [1881MS].

There is a cause for the spirit of insubordination that exists in the family and the State, and that threatens to overthrow the very foundations of government. It is to be found in the growing disregard for the law of God. In ancient times parents were commanded to diligently teach its sacred precepts to their children, that they might thus become acquainted with the character of God, and his claims upon them. But men have become wiser, in their own conceit, than their Maker. Many have set aside the law of God, and have followed their own judgment in preference to his revealed will. How terrible have been the results of this teaching upon the youth! Self-indulgence, dissipation, profanity, and even greater crimes prevail to an extent that is frightful to contemplate. [Cf: ST 11-10-81 para. 14] p. 126, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The Lord holds parents and guardians responsible for the children under their care. He has not left us in uncertainty concerning the characters that he will accept. Nothing less than purity in thought, word, and deed, will meet the divine standard. The word of God sets forth in unmistakable language the duties of parents. If they will faithfully perform these duties, his Spirit will crown their efforts with success. Those words of holy writ are as true now as when first uttered by the wise man, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 11-10-81 para. 15] p. 127, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Our great enemy is constantly seeking to make men believe themselves wiser than their Creator. Like Eve, many follow the dictates of human wisdom, in preference to the commands of the Omniscient One. Such was the sin of Eli; and terrible indeed were its results,--disaster and death to himself, ruin to his wicked sons, and ruin to thousands in Israel. [Cf: ST 11-24-81 para. 01] p. 127, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Yet there are many today, standing like Eli in holy office, who are making the same mistake. They read his mournful history, but fail to profit by the warning. In their self-confidence they think they know a better way of training their children than that which God has given us in his word. The earnest, anxious prayer does not ascend from their hearts, "Teach us, how shall we order the child, and what shall we do unto him?" With all their learning and intelligence, the results of their training show the vaunted wisdom of these persons to be but folly. Fond, indulgent parents, they allow their children to grow up from babyhood without restraint; and thus their forward, selfish, disagreeable ways become confirmed habits, rendering them unloving and unlovable. [Cf: ST 11-24-81 para. 02] p. 127, Para. 3, [1881MS].

God himself established the family relations. His word is the only safe guide in the management of children. Human philosophy has not discovered more than God knows, or devised a wiser plan of dealing with children than that given by our Lord. Who can better understand all the needs of children than their Creator? Who can feel a deeper interest in their welfare than He who bought them with his own blood? If the word of God were carefully studied and faithfully obeyed, there would be less soul-anguish over the perverse conduct of wicked children. [Cf: ST 11-24-81 para. 03] p. 127, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Eli was quick to see and rebuke the sins and errors of the people, sometimes, as in the case of Hannah, even administering unjust reproof; but the sins of his own sons seemed to him less offensive than the sins of others. In his undue affection he was ever ready to find excuses for their perverse course. All this was dishonoring God and misleading the people. To just such an extent as he permitted or excused sin in his children, did he become a partaker in their guilt. As sons of the high priest, they were connected with the work of God, and thus the evil and the sin were greatly heightened. [Cf: ST 11-24-81 para. 04] p. 127, Para. 5, [1881MS].

It is very natural for parents to be partial to their own children. Especially if these parents feel that they themselves possess superior ability, they will regard their children as superior to other children. Hence much that would be severely censured in others is passed over in

their own children as smart and witty. While this partiality is natural, it is unjust and unchristian. A great wrong is done our children when we permit their faults to go uncorrected. Many foster wrong traits of character in their children, urging as an excuse, "They are too young to be punished. Wait until they become older, and can be reasoned with. They will outgrow many of these evil tendencies." Thus their wrong habits are left to grow and strengthen until they become second nature. Sometimes the father and mother are united in this error. Sometimes one would gladly pursue a wiser course; but when that one attempts to enforce obedience, the other takes the part of the child, and will not allow it to be brought into submission. The sad results of such a course can be fully seen only in eternity. They can never be estimated in this life. [Cf: ST 11-24-81 para. 05] p. 127, Para. 6, [1881MS].

But great as are the evils of parental unfaithfulness under any circumstances, they are tenfold greater when they exist in the family of those who stand in Christ's stead, to instruct the people. Ministers of the gospel, who fail to control their own households, are, by their wrong example, misleading many. They sanction the growth of evil, instead of repressing it. Many who consider themselves excellent judges of what other children should be and what they should do, are blind to the defects of their own sons and daughters. Such a lack of divine wisdom in those who profess to teach the word of God, is working untold evil. It tends to efface from the minds of the people the distinction between right and wrong, purity and vice. [Cf: ST 11-24-81 para. 06] p. 128, Para. 1, [1881MS].

When ministers and people will exchange their natural pride of heart and independence for a childlike, teachable spirit; when, instead of trusting to their own understanding, and conforming to the maxims and customs of the world, they will sit at the feet of Jesus, and earnestly inquire, "Lord, what will thou have me to do?" then his wisdom will direct them, his Spirit work with their efforts, and we shall see the youth who now drift into the ranks of Satan, serving under the banner of the Prince of Life. [Cf: ST 11-24-81 para. 07] p. 128, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Oh that the Elis of today, who are everywhere to be found pleading excuses for the waywardness of their children, would promptly assert their own God-given authority to restrain and correct them. Let parents and guardians, who overlook and excuse sin in those under their care, remember that they thus become accessory to these wrongs. If, instead of unlimited indulgence, the chastening rod were oftener used, not in passion, but with love and prayer, we would see happier families and a better state of society. [Cf: ST 11-24-81 para. 08] p. 128, Para. 3, [1881MS].

We have no sympathy with that discipline which would discourage children by hard censure, or irritate them by passionate correction, and then, as the impulse changes, smother them with kisses, or harm them by injurious gratification. Excessive indulgence and undue severity are alike to be avoided. While vigilance and firmness are indispensable, so also are sympathy and tenderness. Parents, remember that you deal with children who are struggling with temptation, and that to them these evil promptings are as hard to resist as are those that assail persons of mature years. Children who really desire to do

right may fail again and again, and as often need encouragement to energy and perseverance. Watch the workings of these young minds with prayerful solicitude. Strengthen every good impulse, encourage every noble action. The Lord, through an apostle, admonishes parents, "Provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged." The word of God is your guide, Christian parents. Depart not from it to gratify any impulse of passion or of affection. [Cf: ST 11-24-81 para. 09] p. 128, Para. 4, [1881MS].

If parents desire to teach their children self-control, they must first form the habit themselves. The scolding and faultfinding of parents, encourages a hasty, passionate temper in their children. Love and justice should stand side by side in the government of the household. Let prompt obedience to parental authority be invariably enforced. God has given parents their work, to form the characters of their children after the Divine Pattern. By his grace, they can accomplish the task; but it will require patient, painstaking effort, no less than firmness and decision, to guide the will and restrain the passions. A field left to itself produces only thorns and briars. He who would secure a harvest for usefulness or beauty must first prepare the soil and sow the seed, then dig about the young shoots, removing the weeds and softening the earth, and the precious plants will flourish and richly repay his care and labor. [Cf: ST 11-24-81 para. 10] p. 129, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The work of parents is continuous. It should not be laid hold of vigorously for one day, and neglected the next. Many are ready to begin the work, but are not willing to persevere in it. They are eager to do some great thing, to make some great sacrifice; but they shrink from the unceasing care and effort in the little things of everyday life, the hourly pruning and training of the wayward tendencies, the work of giving instruction, reproof, or encouragement, little by little, as it is needed. They wish to see children correct their faults and form right characters at once, reaching the mountaintop at a bound, and not by successive steps; and because their hopes are not immediately realized, they become disheartened. Let all such persons take courage as they remember the words of the apostle, "Be not weary in well doing; for in due season ye shall reap, if ye faint not." [Cf: ST 11-24-81 para. 11] p. 129, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Satan has prepared his snares for parents, tempting them to extravagance in dress, to an unnecessary outlay of time and money in the preparation of food, and to needless indulgence in many other forms. The demands of fashion so fully engross the time and attention that little room is left for communion with God, self-discipline, or the training of children. Thus too many parents let slip from their shoulders the responsibility of family government. It requires earnest heartwork to repress evil tendencies, strengthen weak principles, develop good and lovely traits of character, and direct all the powers of mind and body in the right channel. Fathers and mothers, will you not lay hold of your work with energy, perseverance, and love? Sow the precious seed daily, with earnest prayer that God will water it with the dews of grace, and grant you an abundant harvest. The Son of God died to redeem a sinful, rebellious race. Shall we shrink from any toil or sacrifice to save our own dear children? [Cf: ST 11-24-81 para. 12] p. 129, Para. 3, [1881MS].

By precept and example, let the young be taught reverence for God and for his word. Many of our youth are becoming infidels at heart, because of the lack of devotion in their parents. The law of God should be the law of the household. Let fathers and mothers kindly and patiently instruct their children, both from the inspired word and from the book of nature, leading them to understand the character of God. Let them show in their own lives that they are continually seeking to know and to do his will. To secure the approval of their Heavenly Father is the great motive to be ever kept before the minds of children. The service of God should be presented, not as an irksome task, but as a precious privilege, by which they may enjoy an honored, useful, and happy life here, and infinitely greater honor, usefulness, and joy in the life hereafter. [Cf: ST 11-24-81 para. 13] p. 129, Para. 4, [1881MS].

God has permitted light from his throne to shine all along the path of life. A pillar of cloud by day, a pillar of fire by night, is moving before us as before ancient Israel. It is the privilege of Christian parents today, as it was the privilege of God's people of old, to bring their children with them to the promised land. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 11-24-81 para. 14] p. 130, Para. 1, [1881MS].

As the sons of Eli advanced to manhood, and entered upon the duties of the priesthood, the evil effects of their early training became more apparent. Though engaged in so important and sacred a work, they were "sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord." From childhood they had been familiar with the solemn, impressive services of the sanctuary. They had been faithfully instructed in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord. Intellectually, they had a knowledge of God; but their hearts had never yielded to the influence of divine grace. They loved not God's character or his requirements. [Cf: ST 12-01-81 para. 01] p. 130, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Had these youth improved the privileges granted them, they might have become men of both intellectual and moral power. A faithful obedience to God's requirements will have a surprising influence to elevate, develop, and strengthen all man's faculties. Those who have in youth devoted themselves to the service of God, are found to be the men of sound judgment and keen discrimination. And why should it not be so? Communion with the greatest Teacher the world has ever known, strengthens the understanding, illuminates the mind, and purifies the heart--elevates, refines, and ennobles the whole man. "The entrance of Thy word giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." [Cf: ST 12-01-81 para. 02] p. 130, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Among the youth who profess godliness, there is a large class who may seem to contradict this statement. They make no advancement in knowledge or in spirituality. Their powers are dwarfing, rather than developing. But the psalmist's words are true of the genuine Christian. It is not, indeed, the bare letter of God's word that gives light and understanding; it is the word opened and applied to the heart by the Holy Spirit. When a man is truly converted, he becomes a son of God, a partaker of the divine nature. Not only is the heart renewed, but the intellect is strengthened and invigorated. There have been many instances of persons who before conversion were thought to possess ordinary and even inferior ability, but who after conversion seemed entirely transformed. They then manifested remarkable power to comprehend the truths of God's word, and to present these truths to

others. Men of high intellectual standing have considered it a privilege to hold intercourse with these men. The Sun of Righteousness, shedding its bright beams into their minds, quickened every power into more vigorous action. [Cf: ST 12-01-81 para. 03] p. 130, Para. 4, [1881MS].

God will do a great work for the youth, if they will by the aid of the Holy Spirit, receive his word into the heart, and obey it in the life. He is constantly seeking to attract them to himself, the Source of all wisdom, the Fountain of goodness, purity, and truth. The mind which is occupied with exalted themes, becomes itself ennobled. Those who profess to serve God, and yet make no advancement in knowledge and piety, are Christians only in name. The soul temple is filled with desecrated shrines. Frivolous reading, trifling conversation, and worldly pleasure, occupy the mind so completely that there is no room left for the entrance of God's word. Worldliness, frivolity, and pride take the place which Christ should occupy in the soul. [Cf: ST 12-01-81 para. 04] p. 131, Para. 1, [1881MS].

To fix the heart's best affections upon any finite object, any earthly good, degrades the soul and weakens the intellect. God alone is worthy of man's supreme devotion. The individual whose heart is placed on worldly gain becomes covetous, selfish, and even cruel, in his efforts to amass wealth. Living for himself, he becomes narrow minded. All his thoughts and feelings are absorbed in promoting his own interests. Mind and heart are dwarfed to meet his low standard of excellence. [Cf: ST 12-01-81 para. 05] p. 131, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Those who seek as their chief good the indulgence of appetite and passion, are never good or truly great men. However high they may stand in the opinion of the world, they are low, vile, and corrupt in God's estimation. Heaven has ordered that the mark of their depravity shall be written upon their very countenance. Their thoughts are of the earth, earthly. Their words reveal the low level of the mind. They have filled the heart with vileness, and well-nigh effaced therefrom the image of God. The voice of reason is drowned, and judgment is perverted. Oh, how is man's entire nature debased by sensual indulgence! When the will is surrendered to Satan, to what depths of vice and folly will not men descend! In vain does truth appeal to the intellect; for the heart is opposed to its pure principles. [Cf: ST 12-01-81 para. 06] p. 131, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Eli's sons chose the false, the sensual, the debased, instead of the true, the pure, and the holy. Thus they became sons of Belial,-- children of Satan. Standing, as they did, in sacred office, the chosen exponents of the divine will, mediators between a holy God and repentant sinners, the course of these wicked men brought temptation upon all Israel. Again the faith and devotion of the people were tested. Those who had cherished iniquity in their hearts, were inclined to unite with these vile men; and many excused their own sins, because those in high position led the way in transgression. [Cf: ST 12-01-81 para. 07] p. 131, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The typical service was the connecting link between God and Israel. The sacrificial offerings were designed to prefigure the sacrifice of Christ, and thus to preserve in the hearts of the people an unwavering faith in the Redeemer to come. Hence, in order that the Lord might

accept their sacrifices, and continue his presence with them, and, on the other hand, that the people might have a correct knowledge of the plan of salvation, and a right understanding of their duty, it was of the utmost importance that holiness of heart and purity of life, reverence for God, and strict obedience to his requirements, should be maintained by all connected with the sanctuary. [Cf: ST 12-01-81 para. 08] p. 131, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The Lord had, through Moses, given the most explicit directions concerning the sacrificial offerings. But selfish, avaricious priests, to serve their own interests, had departed from these instructions. The sacrifice of the peace offerings especially, which were made as an expression of thanksgiving to God, and were presented in great numbers when the people assembled at the annual feasts, afforded a favorable opportunity for unscrupulous priests to enrich themselves at the expense of the people. The Lord had directed that the fat of the peace offering should be burned upon the altar as a type of the great Sacrifice; a specified portion, the breast and the right shoulder, with some minor parts, were given to the priest as his perquisite; the remainder was to be eaten by those who brought the offering. [Cf: ST 12-01-81 para. 09] p. 132, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Infinite wisdom had foreseen that the clamors of appetite, and a covetous desire for gain, might lead the priest to appropriate to himself the sacrifices solemnly devoted to the Lord. That there might be no room for confusion or misunderstanding, the most exact and minute directions had been given. [Cf: ST 12-01-81 para. 10] p. 132, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Hophni and Phinehas, the sons of Eli, disregarded the laws of the sanctuary more boldly than had any of their predecessors. While they arrayed themselves in the sacerdotal garments and ministered before the Lord, they cared only for the gratification of their own debased appetites and passions. The priests not being content with their rightful share of the peace offerings, it had become customary for one of their servants to come while the offerers were cooking their portion in some apartment adjacent to the sanctuary, and to carry away whatever could be taken up with the flesh hook. The great numbers of sacrifices offered, made this a considerable addition to the priest's perquisite. [Cf: ST 12-01-81 para. 11] p. 132, Para. 3, [1881MS].

But even this departure from the Lord's commands failed to satisfy Hophni and Phinehas. They desired the fat, which the Lord had expressly stated should never be eaten, but burned on the altar as an offering to himself. As they had learned to despise the authority of their father, they now despised the authority of God, and sent their servants to demand the flesh of the peace offerings before the fat had been separated from it. When the offerer remonstrated, "Let them not fail to burn the fat presently, and then take as much as thy soul desireth," the answer was, "Nay, but thou shalt give it to me now; and if not, I will take it by force." The people stood in awe of the priests, and submitted to their unlawful claims, robbing themselves of their rightful share of the offering. Thus, appetite, selfishness, and avarice triumphed, exerting their evil influence upon the people at the very time when every heart should have been directed in penitence and faith to the great Sacrifice which was to take away the sins of the world. These things had a telling influence upon the people, and they

were fast losing all sense of the sacredness of the sacrificial offerings, and of the importance of attending upon the services of the sanctuary. [Cf: ST 12-01-81 para. 12] p. 132, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The recreant priests added licentiousness to the dark catalogue of their crimes; yet they still polluted by their presence the tabernacle of the Lord, and, laden with sin, dared to come into the presence of a holy God. As the men of Israel witnessed the corrupt course of the priests, they thought it safer for their families not to come up to the appointed place of worship. Many went from Shiloh with their peace disturbed, their indignation aroused, until they at last determined to offer their sacrifices themselves, concluding that this would be fully as acceptable to God, as to sanction in any manner the abominations practiced in the sanctuary. [Cf: ST 12-01-81 para. 13] p. 133, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The worship which Jehovah himself had ordained was despised and neglected because associated with the sins of wicked men. This was a critical time for the people of God. Ungodliness, profligacy, and even idolatry prevailed to a fearful extent among them. And where now was the priest and judge of Israel? Eli was not ignorant of the course pursued by his sons. Faithful men, who mourned over the corruption of the priesthood, presented the matter in its true character before him. The indignation of the people had been aroused, and complaints were coming to him from every side. He had passed over these transgressions till he dared remain silent no longer. But the aged father still manifested the same partiality which he had ever shown his wayward sons. He took no decisive measures to bring them to justice, but mildly remonstrated with them, as with persons of tender conscience, who had for once fallen under temptation:-- [Cf: ST 12-01-81 para. 14] p. 133, Para. 2, [1881MS].

"And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people. Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear; ye make the Lord's people to transgress. If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him? [Cf: ST 12-01-81 para. 15] p. 133, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Eli had long known that his sons were not what God would have them. He knew that they did not give to Israel an example worthy of imitation. But he was growing old, and the burden of official care rested heavily upon him. Some one must assist him in bearing this responsibility. Should he deal justly with his sons, they would be speedily rejected from the priestly office, and punished with death. He dreaded thus to bring public disgrace and condemnation upon them. By passing over their crimes again and again without punishment, his own abhorrence of sin was lessened, and in his efforts to shield them, he became accessory to their guilt. [Cf: ST 12-01-81 para. 16] p. 133, Para. 4, [1881MS].

God held Eli, as priest and judge of Israel, accountable for the moral and religious standing of his people, and in a special sense for the character of his sons. The most severe punishment should have been meted out to them, as due the insulted honor of God, and as needful to counteract the influence of their daring sacrilege and gross immorality. Well had it been for Eli and for all Israel, had the high priest manifested such zeal for the honor of God, and such a desire to

avert his wrath, as had been shown by the tribe of Levi in slaying the worshipers of the golden calf. On that occasion the priests at God's command executed justice upon the leaders in transgression, without regard to rank or kindred. Those who faithfully performed this painful duty, were approved and honored of the Lord. [Cf: ST 12-01-81 para. 17] p. 133, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Had not Eli's love for his wicked sons surpassed his zeal for the honor of God, he would have pursued a similar course. He should have exercised his authority to repress crime and uphold righteousness, thus saying to all Israel, "Sin is sin, even if found in the sons of the high priest; and although a most painful duty devolves upon me as a father, God shall not be dishonored by my sons before the people. Holiness and iniquity shall not be confounded in the minds of Israel, because men in high position dare to sin." But the aged priest loved ease and peace, and rather than endure the pain and strife of meeting and resisting wrong, he remained silent, and suffered the work on iniquity to go on and the clouds of divine wrath to gather above a guilty nation. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 12-01-81 para. 18] p. 134, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Unmerited mercy, no less than strict justice, were strikingly displayed in the Lord's dealings with the house of Eli. Notwithstanding the Heaven-daring crimes of the ungodly sons, and the sinful neglect of the indulgent father, the Lord waited long for them to turn from their evil ways. Then he sent a prophet to denounce their sins and to warn them of impending judgment. Without fear or favor, this chosen messenger of God set forth the high honors which the Most High had conferred upon them, and their base ingratitude in so degrading their holy office:-- [Cf: ST 12-08-81 para. 01] p. 134, Para. 2, [1881MS].

"Thus saith the Lord, Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house? And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? And did I give unto the house of thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel? Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering which I have commanded in my habitation; and honorest thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people? Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever; but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me; for them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." [Cf: ST 12-08-81 para. 02] p. 134, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Except in his neglect to restrain and control his sons, Eli had faithfully performed the duties of his office. But his failure to maintain the honor of God by repressing sin with an impartial hand, gave rise to a long train of evils, bringing crime and anguish upon a whole nation. In the history of Eli and his sons is a solemn warning for all the ministers of Christ--an admonition to guard their own hearts with diligence, to keep holy all God's requirements, that his blessing may rest upon the workmen, and that the work may bear the signet of Heaven. It should also impress upon them their duty to rebuke sin in the members of the church, be they high or low, rich or poor. Even our dearest friends are not to come between us and our allegiance to God. We need not expect to receive the divine blessing until all

that has been left for man to do is done to correct error and repress sin. To neglect this duty, or to be slothful and careless in its performance, is to disobey God, to sanction sin, and to bring his wrath upon his people. [Cf: ST 12-08-81 para. 03] p. 134, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The example of ministers should be such as to impress the people with reverence for God, and with fear to offend him. They should honor the Lord at all times, ever acknowledging that of themselves they can do nothing, that their strength and wisdom must come from God, and that all the glory belongs to him. Those who occupy responsible positions, where if connected with God they might do much good, yet who abuse these privileges by the gratification of appetite or unlawful passion, will be visited with the wrath of God according to the gifts which they have perverted. [Cf: ST 12-08-81 para. 04] p. 135, Para. 1, [1881MS].

It is plainly written on the unrenewed heart and on a fallen world, All seek their own. Selfishness is the great law of our degenerate nature. Selfishness occupies that place in the soul where Christ should sit enthroned. Never does Satan more effectually accomplish his work than in controlling the minds and hearts of those who minister in sacred things. Transforming himself into an angel of light, his true character is not discerned. Alas, how many of the agents of the great deceiver are to be found in the holy office of the ministry! They may possess intellectual ability, they study, preach, and pray, and are looked upon as pious men because engaged in a sacred work. Then, taking advantage of the confidence reposed in them, they lead souls to ruin and to death. There are men in holy office today who are similar in character to Hophni and Phinehas. They give loose rein to passion, and disguise their depravity under a cloak of religion. When at last their true character is detected and exposed, the faith of the people receives a shock that often destroys their confidence in religion. Imperceptibly there is left upon the mind a distrust of all who profess to teach the word of God. The message of the true servant of Christ is doubtfully received. The question constantly comes up, "Will not this man prove to be like the one we thought so holy and found so corrupt?" Thus the word of God loses its power upon the souls of men. These false shepherds are of the class who in the day of God will say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" It is to such men that our Lord will declare, "I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." [Cf: ST 12-08-81 para. 05] p. 135, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Said the great apostle, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." We live in an age when the spurious abounds; but, thank God, there is a true, or there would be no counterfeit. Let all who would be numbered with the faithful few, seek to follow the example of the self-denying apostle. [Cf: ST 12-08-81 para. 06] p. 135, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The words of reproof to Eli are also a reproof to all parents who pursue a similar course. Indulgence of the wayward inclinations of the youth is registered in the books of Heaven as a sin. If a minister of the gospel neglect his duty as a parent, his guilt is as much greater than that of others as his position is more responsible. He is showing contempt for the authority of God. While teaching his word to others, he disregards it himself. That parent can have no true sense of the

worth of souls, who permits his children to grow up without restraint, going out from his hearth with their hearts at enmity with God and his law, to infuse that enmity into the hearts of others. [Cf: ST 12-08-81 para. 07] p. 135, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The very beginnings of evil, the first manifestations of insubordination, should be resolutely checked. The indulgence of appetite and passion should be restrained with earnestness and decision. When parents neglect this work, they permit thorns and briers to occupy the heart-gardens which God has commanded them to sow with precious seed, and to till with care, that a harvest may be brought forth unto eternal life. God will surely visit the transgressors with judgment. Both parents and children must reap the harvest sown. [Cf: ST 12-08-81 para. 08] p. 136, Para. 1, [1881MS].

In the sons of Eli, we may see the sons of many professedly Christian parents. None are more stubborn and perverse, none less susceptible to the influence of the Holy Spirit, than are many of these victims of parental indulgence. There is no class that will exert a more pernicious influence than such ungodly youth. By their inconsistent course, they furnish the enemies of God with arguments against Christianity. There are skeptics and even atheists who are at times troubled, and almost persuaded to believe in the existence of God and the truth of the Scriptures. Satan fears to lose them from his ranks, and he calls their attention to the perverse and immoral children of professed Christians, as the fruit of belief in God and the Bible. The careless find in their course an excuse for not giving themselves to Christ, and many who really desire to become Christians, are discouraged. These wayward youth are successful agents of Satan. Ungodliness and immorality follow in their path, and the crime of perverting and polluting many souls rests upon them, and upon the parents whose neglect of duty made them what they are. [Cf: ST 12-08-81 para. 09] p. 136, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Professed Christians have by their inconsistent course done greater harm to the cause of Christ than can be done by open opposers. The world at large judge of Christianity by the course of its advocates. If this be evil, the system itself is rejected. When a missionary once urged an Indian chief to be a Christian, "the plumed savage drew himself up in the consciousness of superior rectitude, and with indignation quivering on his lip and flashing in his eagle eye, replied, 'Christian lie; Christian cheat; Christian steal, drink, murder; Christian rob me of my lands, and slay my tribe;' adding as he turned haughtily on his heel, 'I will be no Christian.'" Alas that this incident truly represents the course of some who are looked upon by the world as the representatives of Christ! [Cf: ST 12-08-81 para. 10] p. 136, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Eli knew that the wickedness of his sons and the iniquity which by their influence had spread through all Israel, must call down upon his family and upon the nation the judgments of God. He remembered how promptly similar offenders had been punished in the past. In the days of Joshua, one man's sin brought disaster and defeat upon the whole nation. When, contrary to the command of God, Achan took of the spoils of their enemies, and concealed the coveted treasure in his tent, the divine presence was withdrawn from Israel, until the crime had been put away by the death of the offender. The Lord gave Joshua to understand

that the sin of even one man would bring the divine wrath upon the whole congregation. [Cf: ST 12-08-81 para. 11] p. 136, Para. 4, [1881MS].

There was work for both magistrate and people, to keep the camp free from iniquity. They must have vigilant care, not only for themselves, but for one another, lest sin should prevail, and the Lord's name be dishonored. [Cf: ST 12-08-81 para. 12] p. 137, Para. 1, [1881MS].

God's character changes not. He was the same in Eli's time as in the days of Joshua. The iniquity signally punished in the early history of Israel could not be tolerated in later years. The crimes of Eli's sons were far greater than the sin of Achan. And their guilt was heightened by the greater light which they had received; they were acquainted with the history of his sin and its terrible punishment, and they had enjoyed superior advantages for religious education and training. Notwithstanding the Lord's forbearance toward them, they had stubbornly gone on in sin, and now the prophet of the Lord pronounced their fate:-- [Cf: ST 12-08-81 para. 13] p. 137, Para. 2, [1881MS].

"And this shall be a sign unto thee that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them. And I will raise me up a faithful priest that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind; and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever." [Cf: ST 12-08-81 para. 14] p. 137, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Man may be deceived by the outward appearance; but the Lord looketh upon the heart. Those who steal the livery of Heaven that they may allure souls to death, will as surely receive retributive justice as did Achan, Hophni, and Phinehas. Every man is sowing seed which will produce a harvest for him to reap by and by. We are all treasuring up stores for eternity. The righteous are laying up eternal riches; the wicked treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath. While acquiring property on earth, the sinner is by his transgression of God's law gathering for himself anguish and bitterness. He may be honored of men, but, saith the Lord, "Them that honor me, I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." The record of every act of injustice, of cruelty, or licentiousness, is passing up to Heaven to be registered in the book of God's remembrance. Today the treasure of wrath is greater than it was yesterday; and tomorrow the sinner will add to the amount. Every soul whom his influence has helped to lead astray increases the treasure he has laid up, the vengeance of God, accumulating, deepening, darkening. [Cf: ST 12-08-81 para. 15] p. 137, Para. 4, [1881MS].

In Eli's reproof to his sons are words of solemn and fearful import,-- words which all who minister in sacred things would do well to ponder. "If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?" Had their crimes injured only their fellow-men, the judge might have made reconciliation by appointing a penalty, and requiring restitution; and thus the offenders might have been pardoned. Or had they sinned ignorantly, the priest might have presented a sin-offering for them, and secured their pardon. But their sins were so interwoven with their ministration as priests of the Most High, in offering sacrifice for sin; the work of God was so profaned and dishonored before the people, that no expiation

could be accepted for them. Their own father, though himself high priest, dared not make intercession for them; he could not shield them from the wrath of a holy God. Let those whose hearts are given to the service of sin and Satan, beware how they pollute the sacred office of the ministry. Let them beware how, while at heart agents of Satan, they dare to stand before the people as ambassadors for Christ. In the day of Judgment the doom of Hophni and Phinehas will be theirs. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 12-08-81 para. 16] p. 137, Para. 5, [1881MS].

While Eli's heart was filled with anxiety and remorse by the evil course of his sons, he found relief and comfort in the integrity and devotion of the youthful Samuel. His ready helpfulness and unvarying fidelity lightened the burdens of the careworn priest. Eli loved Samuel; for he saw that the grace and love of God rested upon him. It was not customary for the Levites to enter upon their peculiar services until they were twenty-five years of age. But Samuel had been an exception to this rule. Every year saw more important trusts committed to him, and, while yet a child, a linen ephod was placed upon him, as a token of his consecration to the work of the sanctuary. [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 01] p. 138, Para. 1, [1881MS].

As Samuel grew older, the anxiety of his parents in his behalf became more intense. Many were the petitions offered that he might not be contaminated by the wickedness reported concerning the sons of Eli. "And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favor both with the Lord and also with men." [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 02] p. 138, Para. 2, [1881MS].

When but twelve years old, the son of Hannah received his special commission from the Most High. The circumstances of that call are best related in the simple and touchingly beautiful language of the sacred writer: "The word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision. And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see; and ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep, that the Lord called Samuel." Supposing the voice to be that of Eli, the child hastened to the bedside of the aged priest, saying, "Here am I, for thou calledst me." The answer was, "I called not, my son, lie down again." Three times Samuel was called, and thrice he responded in like manner; and then Eli was convinced that the mysterious call was the voice of God. What feelings must have stirred the heart of the high priest at that hour! God had passed by his chosen servant, the man of hoary hairs, to commune with a child. This in itself was a bitter yet deserved rebuke to Eli and his house. [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 03] p. 138, Para. 3, [1881MS].

No spirit of envy or jealousy was awakened in Eli's heart. He humbly submitted to the will of God, and directed Samuel to answer, if again called, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." Once more the child heard the mysterious voice, and answered, "Speak, for thy servant heareth." So awed was he at the thought that the great God should speak to him, that he could not remember the exact words which Eli bade him say. [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 04] p. 138, Para. 4, [1881MS].

"And the Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken

concerning his house. When I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever." [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 05] p. 139, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The Scriptures state that before receiving this message from God, "Samuel did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him." He was not destitute of a knowledge of God, nor he was a stranger to the influence of divine grace; but he was not acquainted with such direct manifestations of his presence, as were granted to the prophets. It was the Lord's purpose, however, to reveal himself in an unexpected manner, that Eli might hear of it through the surprise and inquiry of the youth. [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 06] p. 139, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Samuel had not been ignorant of the wicked course pursued by the sons of Eli, but he was filled with fear and amazement that the Lord should commit to him so terrible a message. He arose in the morning and went about his duties as usual, but with a heavy burden on his young heart. How earnestly did he long for the sympathy and counsel of his parents in that trying hour! The Lord had not commanded him to reveal the fearful denunciation to the priest or to his sons; hence he remained silent, avoiding as far as possible the presence of Eli. He trembled, lest some question would compel him to declare the divine judgments against one whom he so loved and revered. [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 07] p. 139, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Eli was confident that the message concerned himself. He felt that some great calamity was about to fall upon him and his house. He called Samuel, and solemnly charged him to faithfully relate what the Lord had revealed. The youth obeyed, and when the venerable man heard the appalling sentence, he bowed in meek submission: [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 08] p. 139, Para. 4, [1881MS].

"It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good." Eli's faith in the wisdom and justice of God was unshaken. He confessed his own guilt and the guilt of his sons; and as he looked forward to the dread result, acknowledged that he deserved it all: "It is the Lord; who shall rise up in judgment against him? I have ever found him merciful, longsuffering, holy, and just. Let him do what seemeth him good." [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 09] p. 139, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Year after year the Lord for Eli's sake delayed his threatened judgments. How much might have been done in those years, to redeem the failures of the past! But the aged priest took no effective measures to avert the doom that hung over himself and his house. The forbearance of God caused Hophni and Phinehas to harden their hearts, and to become still bolder and more defiant in transgression. But steadily and surely the day of retribution was approaching. Every warning slighted, every day of probation squandered, made their punishment greater, their doom more certain. [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 10] p. 139, Para. 6, [1881MS].

God bears long with the perversity and stubbornness of men. By warnings and reproofs he shows them their true condition. Again and again he calls them to repentance. Though the multitudes wax bold in

sin, trampling upon his mercy and defying his justice, still he pours his blessings upon them. Oh, how infinitely beyond human comprehension are the Lord's mercy and forbearance toward the children of men! Yet there is a limit, beyond which men may not go on in sin. When the fullness of iniquity is reached,--as with the Amorites, and the children of Israel who fell in the wilderness,--then the wrath of God is visited upon the transgressors of his law. [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 11] p. 140, Para. 1, [1881MS].

There are many who teach that man may violate God's law with impunity. These men seek to conceal the hideous character of sin, by clothing it with garments of righteousness. They may observe all the forms of religion, but their hearts are at enmity with God. They look upon his law as a yoke of bondage, because it forbids them to indulge their sinful desires. "Thou shalt not," placed at every avenue of sin, is the restriction of the just and holy One. Those who, like Hophni and Phinehas, disregard the commandments of God, and lead others to transgress, are Satan's agents to destroy souls. They say to the sinner, "It shall be well with thee," when God says, "I will punish the transgressor with my wrath, I will take him away in my hot displeasure." [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 12] p. 140, Para. 2, [1881MS].

God may bear long with the sins of men, but in his own time he will vindicate his authority. Although the wicked may say, "My way is hid from the Lord," yet when his interposition is needed, he will show that he beholds all the works of the children of men. In the days of Noah, the wickedness of man became so great that it was necessary for God to assert his authority and punish the transgressors of his law. A crisis had come, and the Lord declared the limits of his forbearance toward that guilty race. He sent his faithful servant with a message of warning, giving them one hundred and twenty years in which to turn from their sins. They rejected and despised God's love, and when the measure of their iniquity was full; when the boundaries of divine mercy were passed, the Lord swept that wicked race from the earth by the waters of the flood. [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 13] p. 140, Para. 3, [1881MS].

As men again increased, they departed from the Lord, and then Abraham was made the depository of God's law. When the Israelites, through their long bondage in Egypt, had to a great degree lost the knowledge of that law, the Lord himself proclaimed it from Sinai, in the hearing of all the people. The nations of the earth were given to idolatry; it was to preserve the children of men from total apostasy, that the Lord manifested his mighty power in bringing the Israelites out of Egypt, and establishing them in the land of Canaan. [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 14] p. 140, Para. 4, [1881MS].

When God's authority had been set aside, and his worship neglected and despised, it became necessary for him to interpose, that the honor of his name might be maintained in the earth. Such a necessity existed in the days of Eli. None but a divine power could free the worship and ordinances of God from the corruption and disorder produced by the course of Hophni and Phinehas. The hand of God must be distinctly recognized; the agents of Israel's apostasy must be destroyed, yet the nation must not become extinct. The service of God must be purged from sin and sinners, and the worship itself honored and exalted. [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 15] p. 140, Para. 5, [1881MS].

God's people had been crying to him with humiliation and fasting, that the wickedness of the wicked might come to an end. And while he manifested his power as an avenger to the wicked, he would also appear as the protector of the righteous. Though their prayers might long have seemed unheard, yet in God's own time they saw that he had given ear to their supplications, and answered them by terrible things in righteousness. [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 16] p. 141, Para. 1, [1881MS].

In every age, God's judgments have been visited upon the earth because men transgressed his law. What, then, have we to expect as we behold the wickedness which prevails at the present day? An ungrateful people, forgetful of God's care, his long forbearance, and his unnumbered blessings, are showing contempt for his holy law. Many of the acknowledged leaders in the church and in the nation, break, and teach others to break that law, as sacred to God as his own throne and name. It is time for the Lord himself to assert his authority in the earth. And he is doing this, by fires, by floods, by tempests. He removes his protecting, providential care, and visits his judgments upon the children of men. [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 17] p. 141, Para. 2, [1881MS].

In these days of peril shall we show less devotion to the truth of God, and less fervent attachment to his law, than in former years? The very condition of things exists which Christ declared would be, prior to his second coming in power and glory. The prevailing ungodliness tends to paralyze and even to destroy true faith and piety. But this is the very time when the gold of Christian integrity will shine brightest, in contrast to the dross of hypocrisy and corruption. Now is the time for Christ's chosen to show their devotion to his service,-- the time for all his followers to bear the noblest testimony for their Master by standing firm against the prevailing current of evil. [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 18] p. 141, Para. 3, [1881MS].

As we see the results which have followed a disregard of God's law,-- dishonesty, theft, licentiousness, drunkenness, and murder--we are prepared to say with the psalmist, "I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold;" "in keeping of them, there is great reward." When the divine law is set aside, the greatest misery will result, both to families and to society. Our only hope of better things is to be found in a faithful adherence to the precepts of Jehovah. Infidel France once tried the experiment of rejecting the authority of God. What scenes of horror followed! Men cast aside the divine law as a yoke of bondage, and in their boasted liberty they placed themselves under the rule of the veriest tyrant. Anarchy and bloodshed ruled that terrible day. It was then demonstrated to the world that the surest way to undermine the foundation of order and government, is to set at naught the law of God. [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 19] p. 141, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Let us remember that "by the law is the knowledge of sin." The commandments of God convict the sinner of his guilt; but that perfect law has been obeyed by Christ in our stead, and through faith in him we are released from our great debt, and are placed where, in his strength, we can render obedience to God. Instead of feeling that we are now in the slightest degree excusable in further transgression, we shall realize as never before the justice of God's claims upon us, and the sacred character of his law, since Christ must die to maintain its authority. [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 20] p. 142, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Ere long the obedient will see the blessed results that follow the keeping of all God's commandments and the transgressors of his law will reap the reward of their doings. The Judge of all the earth will vindicate his insulted authority. Already we see his judgments in the land. And the end is not yet. He will work until sin and sinners are destroyed from the earth. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 12-15-81 para. 21] p. 142, Para. 2, [1881MS].

"Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba, knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord." From one extreme of the land to the other, Samuel's claims to the prophetic office were established, and he received further revelations of God's will in the tabernacle at Shiloh. [Cf: ST 12-22-81 para. 01] p. 142, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The messages of warning and reproof to the house of Eli were made known by him to the whole nation. By so doing he hoped to counteract, in some measure, the evil influence of his past neglect. But these warnings were disregarded by the people, as they had been by the priests. The surrounding nations also, who were not ignorant of the iniquities openly practiced in Israel, became still bolder and more determined in their own course of idolatry and crime. They felt no sense of guilt for their sins, as they would have felt had the Israelites preserved their integrity. [Cf: ST 12-22-81 para. 02] p. 142, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Again the Philistines gathered their forces for war. And Israel, without asking counsel from the Lord, without the concurrence of Eli or Samuel, rashly went out to battle. But the hand of God was not with them, and in the first engagement they were defeated, with a loss of four thousand of their number. When the people returned disheartened to their tents, the elders of Israel said, "Wherefore hath the Lord smitten us today before the Philistines?" The nation was ripe for the judgments of God, yet so blinded by their unbelief and rebellion that they could not see in their disaster a token of the Lord's displeasure. [Cf: ST 12-22-81 para. 03] p. 142, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Instead of confessing and forsaking the sins that had brought defeat upon them, they now set about devising some other means by which to obtain the victory. Then they thought of the ark of God. What wonders had been wrought when the priests bore it before the people into Jordan! How its waters parted, leaving a safe path for that vast company! They remembered also how it was borne about the city of Jericho seven days in solemn silence, and then as the trumpets pealed, and the people gave a great shout, the massive walls fell flat upon the earth. [Cf: ST 12-22-81 para. 04] p. 142, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The recollection of these glorious triumphs inspired all Israel with fresh hope and courage, and they immediately sent to Shiloh for the ark, "that when it cometh among us," said they, "it may save us out of the hand of our enemies." They did not consider that it was the law of God which alone gave to the ark its sacredness, and that its presence would bring them prosperity only as they obeyed that law. While they talked of the "ark of the covenant of the Lord," they ignored the real significance of the title. A covenant is an agreement between parties,

based upon conditions. If Israel would obey the divine law and thus fulfill the conditions of their covenant with God, he would verify his promises to them. But what presumption for them to expect a blessing while they were violating the conditions upon which alone it could be bestowed! [Cf: ST 12-22-81 para. 05] p. 143, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Yet we see a similar blindness and inattention on the part of many at the present day. Having a knowledge of God's law, they are confident and boastful, as though especially favored of Heaven, while they are not from the heart obeying its precepts. God has given to modern Israel warnings, counsel, and reproof, to bring them to repentance and reformation of life. But too often these produce but a momentary impression. The persons warned soon return to their own ways. They flatter themselves that because they have a form of godliness they will be accepted of the Lord, and they go on presumptuously devising and executing plans in accordance with their own finite judgment, and giving little heed to the special manifestations of divine providence. It is one thing to acknowledge the claims of God's law, and quite another thing to render faithful and willing obedience to all its requirements. And let it be remembered that to the obedient alone will the promises of blessing, support, and guidance be fulfilled. [Cf: ST 12-22-81 para. 06] p. 143, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, eagerly acceded to the proposal to bear the ark into the camp. Without the consent of the high priest, they ventured presumptuously into the holy of holies, and took from thence the ark of God. Filled with pride, and elated with the expectation of speedy victory, they bore it to the camp. And the people, beholding, as they thought the token of Jehovah's presence, "shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again." [Cf: ST 12-22-81 para. 07] p. 143, Para. 3, [1881MS].

They overlooked the distinction between the divine presence vouchsafed to an obedient and believing people, and the ark, which was but a symbol of that presence. Hence they confidently looked to the ark for those blessings which God alone could bestow. They saw not the wide contrast between the condition of Israel when the Lord wrought so mightily in their behalf, and their present state. [Cf: ST 12-22-81 para. 08] p. 143, Para. 4, [1881MS].

They were then walking in obedience to God. The ark was borne by holy men in accordance with his express command, and the Captain of the Lord's host went before the repository of his law. Then his arm brought deliverance for them. But they were now following their own plans, in opposition to the divine counsel and authority. The ark was borne by sons of Belial who were doomed to destruction. Yet the people were so infatuated by Satan as to imagine they could induce God to fight for them, when the law under the mercy seat condemned them to defeat, disaster, and death! [Cf: ST 12-22-81 para. 09] p. 143, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The Philistines looked upon the ark as the god of the Hebrews. All the mighty works which Jehovah had wrought for Israel, were attributed to its power. As they heard the shouts of joy and triumph at its approach, they said, "What meaneth the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews?" "And they understand that the ark of the Lord was come into the camp. And the Philistines were afraid, for they said, God is

come into the camp. And they said, Woe unto us, who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty gods? These are the gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness." [Cf: ST 12-22-81 para. 10] p. 144, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The Philistines feared for their nation; yet still they trusted to the power of Dagon their god, and sought to strengthen the courage of the people: "Be strong, and quit yourselves like men, O ye Philistines, that ye be not servants unto the Hebrews, as they have been to you: quit yourselves like men, and fight." They well knew how bitter was the servitude which Israel had endured when in their power, and the thought of themselves becoming slaves to endure like oppression nerved them with the courage of desperation. [Cf: ST 12-22-81 para. 11] p. 144, Para. 2, [1881MS].

A fierce assault upon Israel resulted in their defeat with great slaughter. Thirty thousand men lay dead upon the field, and the ark of God was taken, the two sons of Eli having fallen while fighting to defend it. [Cf: ST 12-22-81 para. 12] p. 144, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The Lord sorely chastised his people Israel, revealing their hypocrisy and rebuking their presumption, and thus left upon the pages of history the testimony for all future ages, that the iniquities of his professed people will not go unpunished. The greater the knowledge of God's will, the greater the sin of those who disregard it. God is not dependent upon men to cause his name to be feared and honored in the earth. He accepts the labors of those who walk in faithfulness and humility before him, but he will reject all who profess to serve him, and yet follow in the course of the unrighteous. God can carry forward his work in the earth without the cooperation of those who would pervert or disgrace it. [Cf: ST 12-22-81 para. 13] p. 144, Para. 4, [1881MS].

While the army of Israel went out to battle, Eli, blind and old, remained at Shiloh. Seating himself at the gate of the tabernacle he anxiously waited for tidings from the field of conflict, "for his heart trembled for the ark of God." Days of agonizing suspense followed. At last there fell upon his ears a sound of lamentation from the town. Soon a messenger drew near, his clothing rent and dust upon his head, and repeated to the high priest his sad tidings:-- [Cf: ST 12-22-81 para. 14] p. 144, Para. 5, [1881MS].

"Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead." Eli could endure all this, terrible as it was, for he had expected it. But when the messenger added, "And the ark of God is taken," a look of unutterable anguish passed over his countenance. The thought that his sin had thus dishonored God and caused him to withdraw his presence from Israel, was more than he could bear; his strength was gone, he reeled upon his seat and fell, "and his neck brake, and he died." [Cf: ST 12-22-81 para. 15] p. 144, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The wife of Phinehas, notwithstanding the impiety of her husband, was a woman who feared the Lord. The death of her father-in-law and her husband, and above all the terrible tidings that the ark of God was in captivity, caused her death. She felt that now the last hope of Israel was gone, and she named the child, born in this hour of adversity,

Ichabod, or inglorious; with her dying breath mournfully repeating the words, "The glory is departed from Israel; for the ark of God is taken." By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: ST 12-22-81 para. 16] p. 145, Para. 1, [1881MS].

It is often asked, Are literary societies a benefit to our youth? To answer this question properly, we should consider not only the avowed purpose of such societies, but the influence which they have actually exerted, as proved by experience. The improvement of the mind is a duty which we owe to ourselves, to society, and to God. But we should never devise means for the cultivation of the intellect at the expense of the moral and the spiritual. And it is only by the harmonious development of both the mental and the moral faculties that the highest perfection of either can be attained. Are these results secured by literary societies as they are generally conducted? [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 1] p. 145, Para. 2, [1881MS].

As the question was first stated, it would appear very narrow-minded to answer in the negative; but in every case where a literary society has been established among our people, its influence has proved to be unfavorable to religious life, and has led to backsliding from God. This has been tried in Battle Creek and in other places, and the result has ever been the same. In some cases, long-standing evils have grown out of these associations. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 2] p. 145, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The irreligious and unconsecrated in heart and life are usually admitted, and are often placed in the most responsible positions. Rules and regulations may be adopted that are thought to be sufficient to hold in check every deleterious influence; but Satan, a shrewd general, is at work to mold the society to suit his plans, and in time he too often succeeds. The great adversary finds ready access to those whom he has controlled in the past, and through them he accomplishes his purpose. The association of the God fearing with the unbelieving in these societies does not make saints of sinners. For a short time, there may be nothing seriously objectionable, but minds that have not been brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ will not take readily to those things which savor of truth and righteousness. If they had heretofore had any relish for spiritual things, they would have placed themselves in the ranks of Jesus Christ. The two classes are controlled by different masters, and are opposites in their purposes, hopes, tastes, and desires. The followers of Jesus enjoy sober, sensible, and ennobling themes, while those who have no love for sacred things cannot take pleasure in these gatherings, unless the superficial and unreal shall make a prominent feature in the exercises. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 3] p. 145, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The purposes and objects which lead to the formation of literary societies may be good; but unless wisdom from God shall control these organizations, they will become a positive evil. Various entertainments are introduced to make the meetings interesting and attractive for worldlings, and thus the exercises of the so-called literary society too often degenerate into demoralizing theatrical performances, and cheap nonsense. All these gratify the carnal mind, that is at enmity with God; but they do not strengthen the intellect nor confirm the morals. Little by little, the spiritual element is ruled out by the irreligious, and the effort to harmonize principles which are

antagonistic in their nature proves a decided failure. When God's people voluntarily unite with the worldly and unconsecrated, and give them the preeminence, they will be led away from him by the unsanctified influence under which they have placed themselves. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 4] p. 146, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Many literary societies are in reality young theaters on a cheap scale, and they create in the youth a taste for the stage. While writing upon this point, my eye falls upon the following striking incident from real life:-- [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 5] p. 146, Para. 2, [1881MS].

"It is of no use, Mrs. W., I have tried again and again, and I cannot become a Christian." [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 6] p. 146, Para. 3, [1881MS].

"So you said a year ago, yet you thought there was nothing in the way." [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 7] p. 146, Para. 4, [1881MS].

"I don't think there is now, but I don't feel any different from what I did then, and I don't believe I ever shall be a Christian." [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 8] p. 146, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The first speaker was a bright girl somewhat over twenty, who, on a previous visit nearly a year before, had confided to her elder friend her earnest desire to become a Christian. Of her evident sincerity there could be no doubt, and the visitor was sorely puzzled to understand why her young friend had not yet found peace. The two were standing by the half-opened door of the Sunday school room, where a rehearsal for an 'entertainment' was in progress; and the girl, looking in, seemed suddenly to find there a suggestion for further thought. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 9] p. 146, Para. 6, [1881MS].

"I believe," she said hesitatingly, "there is one thing I cannot give up." [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 10] p. 146, Para. 7, [1881MS].

"Give it up at once, dear." [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 11] p. 146, Para. 8, [1881MS].

"But I can't." [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 12] p. 147, Para. 1, [1881MS].

"Come to Jesus first then, and he will give you the power." [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 13] p. 147, Para. 2, [1881MS].

"I don't want him to. I believe if I knew I should die and be lost in three weeks from tonight, I would rather be lost than give up my passion." [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 14] p. 147, Para. 3, [1881MS].

"And what is this dearly loved thing, worth so much more than your salvation?" [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 15] p. 147, Para. 4, [1881MS].

"Oh, it isn't worth more, only I love it more, and I can't and won't give it up. It's that I, I want to be an actress; I know I have the talent; I've always hoped the way would open for me to go upon the stage, and I can't help hoping so still." [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 16] p. 147, Para. 5, [1881MS].

"Do you think it would be wrong for you to do so, provided the way did open?' [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 17] p. 147, Para. 6, [1881MS].

"I don't know that it would be a *sin*; but I couldn't do it and be a Christian; the two things don't go together.' [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 18] p. 147, Para. 7, [1881MS].

"How did you come by such a taste? I am sure you do not belong to a theater going family?' [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 19] p. 147, Para. 8, [1881MS].

"Oh no! my father and mother are Methodists; they always disapproved of the theater. I've been in Sunday school all my life. They used to make me sing and recite at the entertainments when I was four years old, and I acted the angel and fairy parts in the dialogues; and when I grew older, I always arranged the tableaux, charades, etc. Then I joined a set of sociables got up by our church young people. At first we did "Mrs. Jarley's Wax-works," and sung "Pinafore" for the benefit of the church; and then we got more ambitious, studied, and had private theatricals, and last winter we hired Mason's Hall and gave a series of Shakespearean performances, which cleared off a large part of the church debt. But that's only second-class work, after all. I want to do the real thing, to go upon the stage as a profession. My father won't hear of it; but I hope some time the way will be opened that I may realize my heart's desire.' [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 20] p. 147, Para. 9, [1881MS].

"And meantime, will you not come to Jesus and be saved?" [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 21] p. 147, Para. 10, [1881MS].

"No, I cannot do it and keep to this hope, and I will not give this up.' [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 22] p. 147, Para. 11, [1881MS].

"And so the visitor turned sadly away, thinking for what miserable messes of pottage men and women are willing to sell their glorious birthright as children of God; thinking also of the seeds which are being sowed in our Sunday schools, the tares among the wheat, and the terrible harvest that may yet spring up from this well meant but injudicious seed sowing." [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 23] p. 147, Para. 12, [1881MS].

It has been our study to devise some plan for the establishment of a literary society which shall prove a benefit to all connected with it,--a society in which all its members shall feel a moral responsibility to make it what it should be, and to avoid the evils that have made such associations dangerous to religious principle. Persons of discretion and good judgment, who have a living connection with Heaven, who will see the evil tendencies, and, not deceived by Satan, will move straight forward in the path of integrity, continually holding aloft the banner of Christ,--such a class are needed to control in these societies. Such an influence will command respect, and make these gatherings a blessing rather than a curse. If men and women of mature age would unite with young persons to organize and conduct such a literary society, it might become both useful and interesting. But when such gatherings degenerate into occasions for fun and boisterous mirth, they are anything but literary or elevating. They are debasing to both mind and morals. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 24] p. 148, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Bible reading, the critical examination of Bible subjects, essays written upon topics which would improve the mind and impart knowledge, the study of the prophecies or the precious lessons of Christ,--these will have an influence to strengthen the mental powers and increase spirituality. And why should not the Bible be brought into such meetings? There is a deplorable ignorance of God's word, even with those who are thought to be intelligent. "Most wondrous book! bright candle of the Lord! Star of eternity! the only light--By which the bark of man can navigate--The sea of life, and gain the coast of bliss securely." [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 25] p. 148, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Why should not this book--this precious treasure--be exalted and esteemed as a valued friend? This is our chart across the stormy sea of life. It is our guidebook, showing us the way to the eternal mansions, and the character we must have to inhabit them. There is no book the perusal of which will so elevate and strengthen the mind as the study of the Bible. Here the intellect will find themes of the most elevated character to call out its powers. There is nothing that will so endow with vigor all our faculties as bringing them in contact with the stupendous truths of revelation. The effort to grasp and measure these great thoughts expands the mind. We may dig down deep into the mine of truth, and gather precious treasures with which to enrich the soul. Here we may learn the true way to live, the safe way to die. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 26] p. 148, Para. 3, [1881MS].

A familiar acquaintance with the Scriptures sharpens the discerning powers, and fortifies the soul against the attacks of Satan. The Bible is the sword of the Spirit, which will never fail to vanquish the adversary. It is the only true guide in all matters of faith and practice. The reason why Satan has so great control over the minds and hearts of men, is that they have not made the word of God the man of their counsel, and all their ways have not been tried by the true test. The Bible will show us what course we must pursue to become heirs of glory. Says the psalmist, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." But this is not the case when it is left unopened and unread. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 27] p. 148, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Literary societies are almost universally exerting an influence contrary to that which the name indicates. As generally conducted, they are an injury to the youth; for Satan comes in to put his stamp upon the exercises. All that makes men manly, or women womanly, is reflected from the character of Christ. The less we have of Christ in such societies, the less we have of the elevating, refining, ennobling element which should prevail. When worldlings conduct these meetings to meet their wishes, the spirit of Christ is excluded; for the Lord's enemies are not pleased with that which would strengthen and confirm a love for spiritual and eternal things. The mind is drawn away from serious reflection, away from God, away from the real and substantial, to the imaginary and the superficial. Literary societies--would that the name expressed their true character! "What is the chaff to the wheat?" [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 28] p. 149, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The mind is so constituted that it must be occupied with either good or evil. If it takes a low level, it is generally because it is left to deal with commonplace subjects--unimportant matters,--not being called out and reined up to grasp those grand and elevated truths which are as

enduring as eternity. The understanding will gradually adapt itself to the subjects with which it is familiarized. Man has the power to regulate and control the workings of the mind, and give direction to the current of his thoughts. But this requires greater effort than we can make in our own strength. We must stay our minds on God, if we would have right thoughts, and proper subjects for meditation. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 29] p. 149, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Few realize that it is a duty to exercise control over their thoughts and imaginations. It is difficult to keep the undisciplined mind fixed upon profitable subjects. But if the thoughts are not properly employed, religion cannot flourish in the soul. The mind must be preoccupied with sacred and eternal things, or it will cherish trifling and superficial thoughts. Both the intellectual and the moral powers must be disciplined, and they will strengthen and improve by exercise. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 30] p. 149, Para. 3, [1881MS].

To understand this matter aright, we must remember that our hearts are naturally depraved, and we are unable, of ourselves, to pursue a right course. It is only by the grace of God, combined with the most earnest efforts on our part, that we can gain the victory. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 31] p. 149, Para. 4, [1881MS].

There are, in the Christian faith, subjects upon which every one should accustom his mind to dwell. The love of Jesus, which passeth knowledge, his sufferings for the fallen race, his work of mediation in our behalf, and his exalted glory,--these are the mysteries into which angels desired to look. Heavenly beings find in these themes enough to attract and engage their deepest thoughts; and shall we, who are so intimately concerned, manifest less interest than the angels, in the wonders of redeeming love? [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 32] p. 149, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The intellect, as well as the heart, must be consecrated to the service of God. He has claims upon all there is of us. However innocent or laudable it may appear, the follower of Christ should not indulge in any gratification, or engage in any enterprise, which an enlightened conscience tells him would abate his ardor, or lessen his fsspirituality. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 33] p. 150, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Pleasure seeking, frivolity, and mental and moral dissipation, are flooding the world with their demoralizing influence. Every Christian should labor to press back the tide of evil, and save our youth from the influences that would sweep them down to ruin. May God help us to press our way against the current! By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 34] p. 150, Para. 2, [1881MS].

"How much owest thou unto my Lord?" Let this question come home to every heart. All that we possess, all that we are, we owe to our Redeemer. He gives us every earthly blessing, and every spiritual good. Are we, by self-denial and sacrifice, doing all in our power to relieve the needy, and to sustain the cause of God? The poor are the Lord's, and the cause of religion is his. Every good thing we enjoy was placed in our hands by his bountiful mercy, as an expression of his love. Christ requires us to do as he has done,--deny self that we may be laborers together with God. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 1] p. 150, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The new year is right upon us, and we should recount the blessings of the past, the favors we have received of God, and then bring to the Lord our freewill offerings, our thank offerings, and our sin offerings. The Sabbathkeepers at Battle Creek have been a liberal people; most of them are poor, but as they have manifested liberality in the past, we hope they will pursue the same course in the future. There are but few who cannot do something. If it costs the poor greater self-denial than it does the rich, the reward will be proportionate. The Lord's bounties are continually flowing in upon us, and he would have us to be living channels, through which his mercies may flow out in deeds of beneficence to our fellow men. In no case let us rob God. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 2] p. 150, Para. 4, [1881MS].

We have the privilege of listening to God's word in our place of worship; but this building, called the Lord's house, has a heavy debt. Shall not we who worship in this commodious edifice put forth earnest efforts to do our share in lifting the debt from the Tabernacle? The poor may be encouraged by the thought that the smallest sums, given in sincerity and cheerfulness, are as acceptable to God as are the thousands cast into the treasury by the rich. There are but few as poor as the widow who gave her two mites as an offering to God. The gift was small, yet it was all her living, and she was commended by the Master. He regarded the two mites of the poor widow as a greater contribution than the rich gifts of the wealthy. He did not measure the value of the offering by its amount, but by the motive, the cheerfulness and purity of the action. Although this small contribution was mingled with the thousands in the treasury, it was not lost to the eye of the great Giver of all good. That little rill which started in the two mites has gathered to itself other tiny streams from thousands of sources, and has had an influence to rebuke selfishness and encourage the giving of larger sums. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 3] p. 150, Para. 5, [1881MS].

All have a work to do, if they would make their life a blessing. We ask our brethren and sisters to act their part as nobly this year as they did last year in contributing toward our house of worship. Open your hearts, and open your purses, and do what you can. Freely and continuously our Redeemer bestows his gifts upon us. Ought we not, then, to give back to the Lord his own? Can we exercise a greater love than God has shown toward us? He has done all that he can do for our good. He appeals to us whether he has left anything undone which our highest interests demand: "Judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it?" We cannot express our gratitude to God by bestowing anything to enrich him, for he is the giver of all our mercies; but he points us to the poor and the afflicted, and to his cause in all its branches, and assures us that he accepts the good done to the least of his followers as if done to himself. God has manifested a deep interest in the welfare of the fallen sons of Adam. He "so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." All the love that men and angels are capable of exercising, sinks into insignificance in comparison with the love of God toward the human family. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 4] p. 151, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The Lord requires us to give liberally for the support of his cause. Should we compare our offerings with those which were constantly

required of the Jews, we would find that we fall far below them in beneficence. Their contributions amounted to fully one-fourth of their entire income. At the lowest estimate, the amount expended upon the tabernacle in the wilderness and the temple at Jerusalem exceeded the cost of all the church edifices in the United States. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 5] p. 151, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Many regard these demands upon the Jews as far above the possible standard of duty required of us. But are there grounds for this conclusion? Are our advantages inferior to those of the Jews? or has God been less beneficent with us than with them? We hear ministers in the various churches extolling the blessings of the gospel, and representing the glory of this age as exceeding in every respect that of the Jewish age. They call the Mosaic dispensation one of darkness, and exalt the present as an age of far greater light and privilege. If this is so, will not God hold us accountable for these increased blessings? Just in proportion to the gifts bestowed, will be his claims upon us. Are the calls of beneficence less numerous now than they were in the Jewish age? It should be the reverse. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 6] p. 151, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The systematic demands upon the Jews were healthful in their influence, and were preventive of pauperism. A poor man was rarely seen among that people. While they rendered willing obedience to God's requirements, his blessing rested upon them, and prosperity attended all their labors. Anciently, the Hebrews were separated from every other nation on the face of the earth. Their field of labor was limited to their own people. Now the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile is broken down, and the way is open for foreign missionary enterprises. The field of our labor is the world. Every nation, tongue, and people can be reached by the saving truth for this time. God has freely intrusted to us, as his stewards, the bread of life, and the means to carry that bread to those who are ready to perish. In view of this, should not our standard of liberality be higher than that of God's ancient people? [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 7] p. 152, Para. 1, [1881MS].

In proportion to their income, the rich are doing less than the poor. Many who give something are not blessed of God, because they do not give more. The Lord would have his people so constrained by the love of Christ that they will gladly meet the wants of his cause. We should ever acknowledge our allegiance to him, and regard it as our reasonable service to devote our energies, our property, and our lives to his work. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 8] p. 152, Para. 2, [1881MS].

When, on account of their faith, the Christians at Jerusalem were reduced to poverty, other churches showed their liberality by supplying the wants of those brethren. Though the Macedonian churches were in great affliction, yet the apostle Paul declares that "the abundance of their joy, and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality." [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 9] p. 152, Para. 3, [1881MS].

We do not urge our brethren to contribute, but as they have hitherto shown a willingness to assist in the work of God, we invite them now to come forward with their offerings, and lessen the debt upon our Tabernacle. We hope to be as much surprised on New Year's eve as was David when he saw the offerings for the temple of the Lord:-- [Cf: RH

01-04-81 para. 10] p. 152, Para. 4, [1881MS].

"And they with whom precious stones were found gave them to the treasure of the house of the Lord, by the hand of Jehiel the Gershonite. Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord; and David the king also rejoiced with great joy. Wherefore David blessed the Lord before all the congregation; and David said, Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel our father, forever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee." By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 11] p. 152, Para. 5, [1881MS].

We should invite our brethren and sisters of other churches, not only in Michigan but in the different States, to consider our situation at Battle Creek. Our institutions being located here, this is a place of no small importance to our cause. In so large a church, there are many more demands for means than in the smaller churches. Many of your poor, your unfortunate, your sick, have for some reason located here. Our College is no financial benefit to the cause in this place, for at this late date it has a heavy debt, which is carried by the Review Office. Yet those who live at a distance are really as much benefited by the College as are our people at Battle Creek. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 1] p. 153, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The house in which we worshiped for a number of years would have accommodated our people in this city. But our congregations have rapidly increased in size since the establishment of the College. Families moved to Battle Creek to educate their children, and students came in to attend the school. These additions, with the patients who came to the Sanitarium, made it a positive necessity to build a larger house of worship. To meet the demands created by the presence of our institutions here, the Tabernacle was erected. It is a commodious building, yet is not extravagant in its design or workmanship. Nothing less than this, in architecture or expense, would we desire to offer to our God as his house. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 2] p. 153, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The erection of this building necessarily required a large outlay of means. Battle Creek, a poor church, has lifted the load nobly; others in the different States have responded to the calls made; and yet our house of worship is encumbered with a debt, which is also carried by the Review Office. This debt should be lifted. Will our brethren and sisters help us at this time? [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 3] p. 153, Para. 3, [1881MS].

In the interchange of presents at the commencement of the new year, we trust that our people, not only at Battle Creek but in all other places, will remember the wants of God's cause. The Lord is not honored by the practice of bestowing costly presents upon a few favorites

because it is the custom. These favorites are seldom the Lord's poor. There are but few whose chief interest at this holiday season is to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and lift up the discouraged and oppressed. Many are really perplexed to decide what gifts they can select that will give pleasure to those who are abundantly supplied with the good things of this life. Let the money usually expended for these gifts, flow into the Lord's treasury. When tempted to purchase expensive ornaments, or other needless articles to please the eye and indulge the fancy, let every one ask himself, "Can I do this to the glory of God, or is it merely to please my friends?" How many, at the commencement of the new year, consider their indebtedness to God while they are making their holiday presents? [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 4] p. 153, Para. 4, [1881MS].

There is no harm in presenting to our friends gifts which they really need. But I entreat you, my brethren and sisters, do not, because it is the custom, bestow gifts upon those who have no real need, while you do little for the poor, and entirely neglect to make your offerings to God. All that we possess belongs to God, and he has made us his stewards. Let us not expend our means for idols to please the fancy and engage the affection of our friends, while we at the same time neglect our best Friend,--the one to whom we owe everything. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 5] p. 154, Para. 1, [1881MS].

I plead with our brethren and sisters everywhere in behalf of our Tabernacle. In this building, students and visitors from all parts of the country assemble weekly to listen to the word of God. It is the duty of other churches to help us in our efforts in this missionary field. The selfish and stingy may say, "I am tired of this continual solicitation for means; will it never cease?" No, never, never! until Christ shall clothe himself in garments of vengeance, and the fiat shall go forth from his lips, He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 6] p. 154, Para. 2, [1881MS].

When our Heavenly Benefactor forgets our returning wants; when God forgets to be gracious, and none of his gifts flow into our barns, our granaries, and our cellars,--then may we plead an excuse for withholding our offerings. God has never left us without expressions of his love," in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." He has declared that "while the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." He guards us every moment by his care, and upholds us by his power. He sends us the cheering sunshine, and the invigorating air; our path is crowded with the tokens of his everlasting love. He spreads our tables with food; he gives us rest and sleep. Weekly he brings to us the Sabbath, the day which he has blessed and sanctified for the good of man. We enjoy freedom from the world's hurry and bustle and wearisome labor, and may worship God in his house according to the dictates of our own conscience, with none to molest, or make afraid. The prophets and apostles suffered torture and death for their religion; but there is no gaping prison or cruel rack awaiting us for our fidelity to God. And as oft as we lift our hearts to him with true penitence and faith, he opens to us the windows of Heaven and gives us the blessings of his grace. Goodness and mercy constantly surround us. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 7] p. 154, Para. 3, [1881MS].

God has given us his holy word to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. As we peruse its teachings, we find ourselves addressed in counsels of wisdom: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." The lesson is repeated to us, both by the word of God and by his providence, "Freely ye have received, freely give,"--give to help the needy, and to sustain the cause of God. The Lord's claims upon us are paramount to all others. We are not to consecrate to him what may remain after all our imaginary wants have been satisfied; but before supplying our own needs, we should present to him the portion which he has specified. And in addition to all this, the thank offering is of perpetual obligation. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 8] p. 155, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Our Redeemer has set us an example in his own life, and we are required to be merciful to our fellow men as he has been merciful to us, needy, dependent creatures of his care. The calls for our beneficence are from God. He works continuously for us, and he requires us to work continually for his cause. When we wish the Infinite Father to withhold from us his gifts, then it will be more reasonable to inquire, "Is there no end of giving?" [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 9] p. 155, Para. 2, [1881MS].

When Mary poured the precious ointment on Jesus' head, our Lord commended the act, and also said, "Ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will, ye may do them good." In this instance, Christ teaches his followers that they should bless the needy with their substance and render back to God in gifts and offerings the blessings he has bestowed upon them. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 10] p. 155, Para. 3, [1881MS].

I counsel you, my brethren and sisters, to commence the new year with a clean record. For the truth's sake and for Christ's sake, make every effort in your power to right your wrongs. Search your hearts critically, analyze your feelings, and remove every cause of dissension. If you have defrauded your brother, angels have written it against you. If you have failed to make his case your own, and to manifest toward him tenderness and compassion, you have neglected your duty, and thus it stands registered against you. Whatever have been the mistakes and errors of the past year, let them be canceled now; let them not be brought into the new year, to mar the purity of its unwritten pages. Come to the Lord with hearts overflowing with thankfulness for past and present mercies, and manifest your appreciation of God's bounties by bringing to him your thank offerings, your freewill offerings, and your trespass offerings. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 11] p. 155, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The Chinese new year is sacredly kept for one week, with great ceremony. Old debts are paid, old grudges are forgiven. If an individual cannot pay his debts, his fellow Chinamen assist him, so that old accounts may not be carried into the new year. They say Joss (their god) will be angry with them if they neglect this work. Although these heathen are ignorant of the true God, yet in these things their example is worthy of imitation, even by Christians. [Cf: RH 01-04-81

para. 12] p. 155, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The worshipers of idols should not be in advance of the children of the living God. Shall not faults be confessed, and differences be put away, before we enter upon the new year? Oh that in every church in our land there might be a settlement of old difficulties, that jealousies and wrongs between brethren might be made right! Would not the world's Redeemer and the holy angels look down upon such a scene with pleasure? Would not the heavenly arches ring with the sweet music, Peace on earth, goodwill to men? Let us try to set things in order among us, that we may have the approbation of Heaven. Let us bring all our tithes into the storehouse, and prove our Lord therewith, and see if he will not open the windows of Heaven, and pour us out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 13] p. 156, Para. 1, [1881MS].

I advise my brethren and sisters to supply themselves the coming year with a home missionary box, wherein to deposit small bits of money for offerings to God, besides the regular tithe. Whenever there is an extra outlay for the gratification of the appetite, let an equal amount also be dropped into this savings bank. The sisters should have a separate box; and for every needless expenditure for ribbons, ruffles, or ornaments of any kind, they should drop the same amount into this receptacle. Let parents prepare a box for each of their children, and after explaining the principle, leave them with their conscience and their God. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 14] p. 156, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Old and young frequently expend means for candies and other hurtful indulgences, and for dainties of which they have no real need. Let them put the same amount into these savings banks the coming year, and they will be surprised at the result. They will find quite a sum, which represents that which they have thoughtlessly squandered to please the taste and gratify pride, when had they practiced self-denial, they would have had for benevolent purposes an amount just double that which they have saved. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 15] p. 156, Para. 3, [1881MS].

As Christians, let us show our faith by our works; and at the commencement of the year, let us enter upon a course of action which will meet the approval of God. Do not neglect to provide yourselves and your children with the little banks. The very fact that for every penny needlessly expended another must be deposited here, will prevent many an unnecessary outlay. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 16] p. 156, Para. 4, [1881MS].

I now ask my brethren and sisters for a New Year's present, not for myself, but for the cause of God. This request will reach many after the new year has come in, but I trust they will not excuse themselves, thinking that it is too late to present their offerings. Let your gifts come in during the entire month of January; and if you cannot command the means now, send in your pledges, stating what you will do, and then redeem these pledges as soon as possible. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 17] p. 156, Para. 5, [1881MS].

I appeal to the congregation that regularly assemble at our Tabernacle: Will you not bring in your offerings to lift the debt from the Lord's house? I appeal to those who send their children to Battle Creek, where they unite with us in the worship of God: Will you not

assist us to lift this debt? I invite all to be especially liberal at this time. Let cheerful freewill offerings be brought to the Lord, let us consecrate to Him all that we are, and all that we have, and then may we all unite to swell the songs,--"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise him, all creatures here below; Praise him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 01-04-81 para. 18] p. 157, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The study of the Bible is superior to all other study in strengthening the intellect. What fields of thought the youth may find to explore in the word of God! The mind may go deeper and still deeper in its research, gathering strength with every effort to comprehend truth; and yet there is an infinity beyond. [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 1] p. 157, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Those who profess to love God and reverence sacred things, and yet allow the mind to come down to the superficial and unreal, are placing themselves on Satan's ground, and are doing his work. If the young would study the glorious works of God in nature, and his majesty and power as revealed in his word, they would come from every such exercise with faculties quickened and elevated. A vigor would be received, having no kin to arrogance. By a contemplation of the marvels of divine power, the mind will learn that hardest but most useful of all lessons, that human wisdom, unless connected with the Infinite, and sanctified by the grace of Christ, is foolishness. [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 2] p. 157, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The work of God's dear Son in undertaking to link the created with the Uncreated, the finite with the Infinite, in his own divine person, is a subject that may well employ our thoughts for a lifetime. This work of Christ was to confirm the beings of other worlds in their innocence and loyalty, as well as to save the lost and perishing of this world. He opened a way for the disobedient to return to their allegiance to God, while by the same act he placed a safeguard around those who were already pure, that they might not become polluted. [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 3] p. 157, Para. 4, [1881MS].

While we rejoice that there are worlds which have never fallen, these worlds render praise, and honor, and glory to Jesus Christ for the plan of redemption to save the fallen sons of Adam, as well as to confirm themselves in their position and character of purity. The arm that raised the human family from the ruin which Satan had brought upon the race through his temptations, is the arm which has preserved the inhabitants of other worlds from sin. Every world throughout immensity engages the care and support of the Father and the Son; and this care is constantly exercised for fallen humanity. Christ is mediating in behalf of man, and the order of unseen worlds also is preserved by his mediatorial work. Are not these themes of sufficient magnitude and importance to engage our thoughts, and call forth our gratitude and adoration to God? [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 4] p. 157, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Open the Bible to our youth, draw their attention to its hidden treasures, teach them to search for its jewels of truth, and they will gain a strength of intellect such as the study of all that philosophy embraces could not impart. The grand subjects upon which the Bible treats, the dignified simplicity of its inspired utterances, the elevated themes which it presents to the mind, the light, sharp and

clear, from the throne of God, enlightening the understanding, will develop the powers of the mind to an extent that can scarcely be comprehended, and never fully explained. [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 5] p. 158, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The Bible presents a boundless field for the imagination, as much higher and more ennobling in character than the superficial creations of the unsanctified intellect as the heavens are higher than the earth. The inspired history of our race is placed in the hands of every individual. All may now begin their research. They may become acquainted with our first parents as they stood in Eden, in holy innocency, enjoying communion with God and sinless angels. They may trace the introduction of sin, and its results upon the race, and follow, step by step, down the track of sacred history, as it records the disobedience and impenitence of man and the just retribution for sin. [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 6] p. 158, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The reader may hold converse with patriarchs and prophets; he may move through the most inspiring scenes; he may behold Christ, who was Monarch in Heaven, equal with God, coming down to humanity, and working out the plan of redemption, breaking off from man the chains wherewith Satan had bound him, and making it possible for him to regain his godlike manhood. Christ taking upon himself humanity, and preserving the level of man for thirty years, and then making his soul an offering for sin, that man might not be left to perish, is a subject for the deepest thought and the most concentrated study. [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 7] p. 158, Para. 3, [1881MS].

If they fulfill the purpose of God, even the most experienced Christians will be continual learners in the school of Christ, that they may become efficient teachers. And it is impossible to explain and enforce the great truths of the Bible without seeing clearer light ourselves. Our own views will become extended, and the effort to make plain to others the words of God will fasten them in our own minds. Men may have enjoyed the training of the schools, and may have made themselves acquainted with the great writers on theology, yet truth will open to the mind, and impress it with new and striking power, as the word of God is searched and pondered with an earnest, prayerful desire to understand it. [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 8] p. 158, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Let the mind grasp the stupendous truths of revelation, and it will never be content to employ its powers upon frivolous themes; it will turn with disgust from the trashy literature and idle amusements that are demoralizing the youth of today. Those who have communed with the poets and sages of the Bible, and whose souls have been stirred by the glorious deeds of the heroes of faith, will come from the rich fields of thought far more pure in heart and elevated in mind than if they had been occupied in studying the most celebrated secular authors, or in contemplating and glorifying the exploits of the Pharaohs and Herods and Caesars of the world. [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 9] p. 159, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The powers of the youth are mostly dormant, because they do not make the fear of God the beginning of wisdom. The Lord gave Daniel wisdom and knowledge, because he would not be influenced by any power that would interfere with his religious principles. The reason why we have

so few men of mind, of stability and solid worth, is that they think to find greatness while disconnecting from Heaven. [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 10] p. 159, Para. 2, [1881MS].

God is not feared, and love, and honored, by the children of men. Religion is not lived out, as well as professed. The Lord can do but little for man, because he is so easily exalted, is so ready to think himself of consequence. God would have us enlarge our capabilities, and avail ourselves of every privilege to unfold, to cultivate, to strengthen the understanding. Man was born for a higher, nobler life than that which he develops. The period of our mortal existence is preparatory to the life which measures with the life of God. [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 11] p. 159, Para. 3, [1881MS].

What subjects are presented in the Sacred Scriptures for the mind to dwell upon! Where can be found higher themes for contemplation? Where are themes so intensely interesting? In what sense are all the researches of human science comparable in sublimity and mystery with the science of the Bible? Where is anything that will so call out the strength of the intellect in deep and earnest thought? [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 12] p. 159, Para. 4, [1881MS].

If we will let it speak to us, the Bible will teach us what nothing else can teach. But alas! everything else is dwelt upon except the word of God. Worthless literature, fictitious stories are greedily devoured, while the Bible, with all its treasures of sacred truth, lies neglected upon our tables. The Sacred Word, if made the rule of life, will refine, elevate, and sanctify. It is the voice of God to man. Will we heed it? [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 13] p. 159, Para. 5, [1881MS].

"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." Angels stand beside the searcher of the Scriptures, to impress and illuminate the mind. The command of Christ comes to us with the same force today as when addressed to the first disciples eighteen hundred years ago: "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 14] p. 159, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The treatment of the barren fig tree by the Saviour of the world, shows how all pretenders to godliness will be treated. He pronounced upon it his withering curse, and left it seared and sapless, rejected by God. This tree represents the Jews, who refused to respond to the love of Christ. Despite all the privileges and opportunities granted them, they brought forth only briers and thorns,--no fruit to the glory of God. This blighted tree was a parable to the house of Israel,--a most impressive lesson. It is also a lesson to the professed followers of Christ in every age. Reaching through all time, it speaks in unmistakable language to all formalists and boasters of godliness who stand forth to the world with high profession, but are utterly devoid of that vital piety which alone God recognizes as fruit. [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 1] p. 160, Para. 1, [1881MS].

There is a decided lack of piety among us as a people. The true burden of the work for the salvation of souls does not rest upon us as it should. Like the barren fig tree, many flaunt their foliage covered branches before the Lord, proudly claiming to be his commandment keeping people, while the heart searching God finds them destitute of

fruit. [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 2] p. 160, Para. 2, [1881MS].

We boast of our advancement in the truth; but our works do not correspond with our profession. We are sadly deficient in spirit, energy, and life. Leaf covered trees are plenty, but they are destitute of fruit. The fearful condition of lukewarmness and unfaithfulness which would exist in the last days was described by the great apostle in these words:-- [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 3] p. 160, Para. 3, [1881MS].

"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 a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away." [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 4] p. 160, Para. 4, [1881MS].

We learn from the Sacred Record that this tree, upon which hung not a redeeming cluster of fruit, was clothed with green foliage. Notice the words. "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." The doom of the fruitless fig tree has an application to individual professors who manifest the natural tendencies of the unrenewed heart, and contradict their faith by their daily life. They do not represent to the world the character of Christ, because they have not Christ in them. [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 5] p. 160, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Our Saviour never turned away from the truly penitent, no matter how great their guilt. But he hates all hypocrisy and vain display. He addressed with the most severe and unqualified reproof the Pharisees and hypocrites represented by the fig tree covered with green foliage, but destitute of fruit. [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 6] p. 160, Para. 6, [1881MS].

Fruitless professors, sad indeed is your fate; for the open sinner stands in a more favorable position in the sight of God. The blight of God's curse is upon that class who hide the deformity of their lives under a profession of godliness. John, that bold, undaunted reprover of sin, who came to prepare the way for Christ's first advent, thus addressed the multitude that flocked to hear him: "Therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" Terrible words! And as we see the many who profess to be God's commandment keeping people, whose lives show that they do not the will of our Father which is in Heaven, we can come to only one conclusion,-- that in the doom of the fig tree which bore no fruit, and upon which fell the withering curse of God, they may read their own fate. [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 7] p. 161, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The compassion and tender love of Jesus for those for whom he died, is without parallel. But when his love and mercy are insulted, when his life and example are misrepresented by those professing to be his followers, severe retribution will surely follow. Christ has bought man with an infinite price. Soul, body, and spirit,--all that constitutes the man,--is the rightful property of our Saviour; and when he sees the body, the temple of the soul, defiled and degraded by indulgence of appetite and lustful passion, and the heart polluted and defiled by sin,--when he sees the soul which was the purchase of his blood,

proving a curse rather than a blessing to the world, he dooms it as he did the fig tree, and it becomes a fearful monument of his righteousness and avenging wrath. [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 8] p. 161, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Jesus is wounded and insulted by his professed followers whose unconsecrated lives disgrace their profession. He would purify the temple courts of the soul; but if his efforts to warn and reprove are not heeded, his forbearance and compassion will be changed to severity and judgment. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 01-11-81 para. 9] p. 161, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Text: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. 5:23. [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 1] p. 161, Para. 4, [1881MS].

There is in the religious world a theory of sanctification which is false in itself, and dangerous in its influence. We have met many who claim to be sanctified; but in many cases those who profess sanctification do not possess the genuine article. Their sanctification consists in talk and will-worship. Those who are really seeking to perfect Christian character will never indulge in the thought that they are sinless. Their lives may be irreproachable, they may be living representatives of the truth which they have accepted; but the more they discipline their minds to dwell upon the character of Christ, and the nearer they approach to his divine image, the more clearly will they discern its spotless perfection, and the more deeply will they feel their own defects. [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 2] p. 161, Para. 5, [1881MS].

When persons claim that they are sanctified, it is sufficient evidence that they are far from being holy. They fail to see their own weakness and utter destitution. They look upon themselves as reflecting the image of Christ, because they have no true knowledge of him. The greater the distance between them and their Saviour, the more righteous they appear in their own eyes. [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 3] p. 162, Para. 1, [1881MS].

While with penitence and humble trust we meditate upon Jesus, whom our sins have pierced and our sorrows have burdened, we may learn to walk in his footsteps. By beholding him we become changed into his divine likeness. And when this work is wrought in us, we shall claim no righteousness of our own, but shall exalt Jesus Christ, while we hang our helpless souls upon his merits. [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 4] p. 162, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Our Saviour ever condemned self-righteousness. He taught his disciples that the highest type of religion is that which manifests itself in a quiet, unobtrusive manner. He cautioned them to perform their deeds of charity quietly; not for display, not to be praised or honored of men, but for the glory of God, expecting their reward hereafter. If they should perform good deeds to be lauded by men, no reward would be given them by their Father in Heaven. [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 5] p. 162, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The followers of Christ were instructed not to pray for the purpose of

being heard of men. "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." Such expressions as this from the lips of Christ show that he did not regard with approval that kind of piety so prevalent among the Pharisees. His teachings upon the mount show that acts of benevolence assume a noble form, and offices of religious worship reflect a most precious fragrance, when performed in an unpretending manner, in penitence and humility. The pure motive sanctifies the act. [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 6] p. 162, Para. 4, [1881MS].

True sanctification is an entire conformity to the will of God. Rebellious thoughts and feelings are overcome, and the voice of Jesus awakens a new life, which pervades the entire being. Those who are truly sanctified will not set up their own opinion as a standard of right and wrong. They are not bigoted or self-righteous; but they are jealous of self, ever fearing, lest a promise being left them, they should come short of complying with the conditions upon which the promises are based. [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 7] p. 162, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Many who profess sanctification are entirely ignorant of the work of grace upon the heart. When proved and tested, they are found to be like the self-righteous Pharisee. They will bear no contradiction. They lay aside reason and judgment, and depend wholly upon their feelings, basing their claims to sanctification upon emotions which they have at some time experienced. Around that point they center all their experience. They are stubborn and perverse in their tenacious claims of sanctification, giving many words, but bearing no precious fruit as proof. These professedly sanctified persons are not only deluding their own souls by their pretensions, but are exerting an influence to lead astray many who earnestly desire to conform to the will of God. They may be heard to reiterate again and again, "God leads me! God teaches me! I am living without sin!" Many who come in contact with this spirit encounter a dark, mysterious something which they cannot comprehend. But it is that which is altogether unlike Christ. [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 8] p. 162, Para. 6, [1881MS].

Sanctification does not consist in strong emotional feelings. Here is where many are led into error. They make feelings their criterion. When they feel elated or happy, they claim that they are sanctified. Happy feelings or the absence of joy is no evidence that a person is or is not sanctified. There is no such thing as instantaneous sanctification. True sanctification is a daily work, continuing as long as life shall last. Those who are battling with daily temptations, overcoming their own natural tendencies, and seeking for holiness of heart and life, make no boastful claims of holiness. They are hungering and thirsting for righteousness. Sin appears to them exceedingly sinful. [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 9] p. 163, Para. 1, [1881MS].

There are those claiming sanctification who make a profession of the truth, like their brethren, and it may be difficult to make a distinction between them; but the difference exists, nevertheless. The testimony of those claiming such an exalted experience will cause the sweet spirit of Christ to withdraw from a meeting, and will leave a chilling influence upon those present, while if they were truly living without sin, their very presence would bring holy angels into the

assembly, and their words would indeed be "like apples of gold in pictures of silver." [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 10] p. 163, Para. 2, [1881MS].

In summer, as we look upon the trees of the distant forest, all clothed with a beautiful mantle of green, we may not be able to distinguish between the evergreens and the other trees. But as winter approaches, and the frost king incloses them in his icy embrace, stripping the other trees of their beautiful foliage, the evergreens are readily discerned. Thus will it be with the meek who walk in humility, distrustful of self, but clinging tremblingly to the hand of Christ. While those who are self-confident, and trust to perfection of character, are soon robbed of their false robe of righteousness when subjected to the storms of trial, the truly righteous, who sincerely love and fear God in humility, wear the robe of Christ's righteousness in prosperity and adversity alike. [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 11] p. 163, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Self-denial, self-sacrifice, benevolence, kindness, love, patience, fortitude, and Christian trust are the daily fruits borne by those who are truly connected with God. Their acts may not be published to the world, but they themselves are daily wrestling with evil, and gaining precious victories over temptation and wrong. Solemn vows are renewed and kept through the strength gained by earnest prayer and constant watching thereunto. The ardent enthusiast does not discern the struggles of these silent workers; but the eye of Him who seeth the secrets of the heart, notices and regards with approval every effort put forth in lowliness and meekness. It requires the testing time to reveal the true gold of love and faith in the character. When trials and perplexities come upon the church, then the steadfast zeal and warm affections of the Christian are developed. [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 12] p. 163, Para. 4, [1881MS].

We feel sad to see professed Christians led astray by the false but bewitching theory that they are perfect, because it is so difficult to undeceive them and get them on the right track. They have sought to make the exterior fair and pleasing, while the inward adorning, the meekness and lowliness of Christ, is wanting. The testing time will come to all, when the hopes of many who have for years thought themselves secure, will be seen to be without foundation. When in new positions, under varied circumstances, some who have seemed to be pillars in the house of God reveal only rotten timber beneath the paint and varnish. But the humble in heart, who have daily felt the importance of riveting their souls to the eternal Rock, will stand unmoved amid the tempests of trial, because they trusted not to themselves. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 13] p. 164, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Those who take pains to call attention to their good works, constantly talking of their sinless state, and endeavoring to make their religious attainments prominent, are only deceiving their own souls by so doing. A healthy man, who is able to attend to the vocations of life, and who goes forth day after day to his labor, with buoyant spirits and with a healthful current of blood flowing through his veins, does not call the attention of everyone he meets to his soundness of body. Health and vigor are the natural conditions of his life, and therefore he is

scarcely conscious that he is in the enjoyment of so rich a boon. [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 14] p. 164, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Thus it is with the truly righteous man. He is unconscious of his goodness and piety. Religious principle has become the spring of his life and conduct, and it is just as natural for him to bear the fruits of the Spirit as for the fig tree to bear figs, or for the rose bush to yield roses. His nature is so thoroughly imbued with love for God and his fellow men that he works the works of Christ with a willing heart. [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 15] p. 164, Para. 3, [1881MS].

All who come within the sphere of his influence perceive the beauty and fragrance of his Christian life, while he himself is unconscious of it, for it is in harmony with his habits and inclinations. He prays for divine light, and loves to walk in that light. It is his meat and drink to do the will of his Heavenly Father. His life is hid with Christ in God; yet he does not boast of this, nor seem conscious of it. God smiles upon the humble and lowly ones who follow closely in the footsteps of the Master. Angels are attracted to them, and love to linger about their path. They may be passed by as unworthy of notice by those who claim exalted attainments, and who delight in making prominent their good works; but heavenly angels bend lovingly over them, and are as a wall of fire round about them. [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 16] p. 164, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Our Saviour was the light of the world; but the world knew him not. He was constantly employed in works of mercy, shedding light upon the pathway of all; yet he did not call upon those with whom he mingled to behold his unexampled virtue, his self-denial, self-sacrifice, and benevolence. The Jews did not admire such a life; they considered his religion worthless, because it did not accord with their standard of piety. They decided that Christ was not religious in spirit or character; for their religion consisted in display, in praying publicly, and in doing works of charity for effect. They trumpeted their good deeds, as do those who claim sanctification. They would have all understand that they were without sin. But the whole life of Christ was in direct contrast to this. He sought neither honor nor applause, His wonderful acts of healing were performed in as quiet a manner as possible, although he could not restrain the enthusiasm of those who were the recipients of his great blessings. Humility and meekness characterized his life. And it was because of his lowly walk and unassuming manners, which were in such marked contrast to their own, that the Pharisees would not accept him. [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 17] p. 165, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The most precious fruit of sanctification is the grace of meekness. When this grace presides in the soul, the disposition is molded by its influence. There is a continual waiting upon God, and a submission of the will to his. The understanding grasps every divine truth, and the will bows to every divine precept, without doubting or murmuring. True meekness softens and subdues the heart, and gives the mind a fitness for the ingrafted word. It brings the thoughts into obedience to Jesus Christ. It opens the heart to the word of God, as Lydia's was opened. It places us with Mary as learners at the feet of Jesus. "The meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way." [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 18] p. 165, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The language of the meek is never that of boasting, but that of the child Samuel,--"Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." When Joshua was placed in the highest position of honor, as commander of Israel, he was bidding defiance to all the enemies of God. His heart was filled with noble thoughts of his great mission. Yet upon the intimation of a message from Heaven, he places himself in the position of a little child to be directed. "What saith my Lord unto his servant?" was his response. The first words of Paul after Christ was revealed to him were, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 19] p. 165, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Meekness in the school of Christ is one of the marked fruits of the Spirit. It is a grace wrought by the Holy Spirit as a sanctifier, and enables its possessor at all times to control a rash and impetuous temper. When the grace of meekness is cherished by those who are naturally sour or hasty in disposition, they will put forth the most earnest efforts to subdue their unhappy temper. Every day they will gain self-control, until that which is unlovely and unlike Jesus is conquered. They become assimilated to the Divine Pattern, until they can obey the inspired injunction, "Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath." [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 20] p. 166, Para. 1, [1881MS].

When a man professes to be sanctified, and yet in words and works may be represented by the impure fountain sending forth its bitter waters, we may safely say, that man is deceived. He needs to learn the very alphabet of what constitutes the life of a Christian. Some who profess to be servants of Christ have so long cherished the demon of unkindness that they seem to love the unhallowed element, and to take pleasure in speaking words that displease and irritate. These men must be converted, before Christ will acknowledge them as his children. [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 21] p. 166, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Meekness is the inward adorning, which God estimates as of great price. The apostle speaks of this as more excellent and valuable than gold, or pearls, or costly array. While the outward adorning beautifies only the mortal body, the ornament of meekness adorns the soul, and connects finite man with the infinite God. This is the ornament of God's own choice. He who garnished the heavens with the orbs of light, has by the same Spirit promised that he will "beautify the meek with salvation." Angels of Heaven will register as best adorned, those who put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and walk with him in meekness and lowliness of mind. [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 22] p. 166, Para. 3, [1881MS].

There are high attainments for the Christian. He may ever be rising to higher attainments. John had an elevated idea of the privilege of a Christian. He says, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." It is not possible for humanity to rise to a higher dignity than is here implied. To man is granted the privilege of becoming an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ. To those who have been thus exalted, are unfolded the unsearchable riches of Christ, which are of a thousand fold more value than the wealth of the world. Thus, through the merits of Jesus Christ, finite man is elevated to fellowship with God and with his dear Son. Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 01-18-81 para. 23] p. 166, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Text: And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. 5:23. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 1] p. 166, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The prophet Daniel was an illustrious character. He was a bright example of what men may become when united with the God of wisdom. A brief account of the life of this holy man of God is left on record for the encouragement of those who should afterward be called to endure trial and temptation. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 2] p. 166, Para. 6, [1881MS].

When the people of Israel, their king, nobles, and priests, were carried into captivity, four of their number were selected to serve in the court of the king of Babylon. One of these was Daniel, who early gave promise of the remarkable ability developed in later years. These youth were all of princely birth, and are described as "children in whom was no blemish, but well favored, and skillful in all wisdom, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them." Perceiving the superior talents of these youthful captives, King Nebuchadnezzar determined to prepare them to fill important positions in his kingdom. That they might be fully qualified for their life at court, according to oriental custom, they were to be taught the language of the Chaldeans, and to be subjected for three years to a thorough course of physical and intellectual discipline. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 3] p. 167, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The youth in this school of training were not only to be admitted to the royal palace, but it was provided that they should eat of the meat, and drink of the wine, which came from the king's table. In all this the king considered that he was not only bestowing great honor upon them, but securing for them the best physical and mental development that could be attained. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 4] p. 167, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Among the viands placed before the king were swine's flesh and other meats which were declared unclean by the law of Moses, and which the Hebrews had been expressly forbidden to eat. Here Daniel was brought to a severe test. Should he adhere to the teachings of his fathers concerning meats and drinks, and offend the king, probably losing not only his position but his life? or should he disregard the commandment of the Lord, and retain the favor of the king, thus securing great intellectual advantages and the most flattering worldly prospects? [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 5] p. 167, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Daniel did not long hesitate. He decided to stand firmly for his integrity, let the result be what it might. He "purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank." [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 6] p. 167, Para. 4, [1881MS].

There are many among professed Christians today who would decide that Daniel was too particular, and would pronounce him narrow and bigoted. They consider the matter of eating and drinking of too little consequence to require such a decided stand,--one involving the probable sacrifice of every earthly advantage. But those who reason thus will find in the day of Judgment that they turned from God's

express requirements, and set up their own opinion as a standard of right and wrong. They will find that what seemed to them unimportant was not so regarded of God. His requirements should be sacredly obeyed. Those who accept and obey one of his precepts because it is convenient to do so, while they reject another because its observance would require a sacrifice, lower the standard of right, and by their example lead others to lightly regard the holy law of God. "Thus saith the Lord" is to be our rule in all things. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 7] p. 167, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Daniel was subjected to the severest temptations that can assail the youth of today; yet he was true to the religious instruction received in early life. He was surrounded with influences calculated to subvert those who would vacillate between principle and inclination; yet the word of God presents him as a faultless character. Daniel dared not trust to his own moral power. Prayer was to him a necessity. He made God his strength, and the fear of God was continually before him in all the transactions of his life. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 8] p. 168, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Daniel possessed the grace of genuine meekness. He was true, firm, and noble. He sought to live in peace with all, while he was unbending as the lofty cedar wherever principle was involved. In everything that did not come in collision with his allegiance to God, he was respectful and obedient to those who had authority over him; but he had so high a sense of the claims of God that the requirements of earthly rulers were held subordinate. He would not be induced by any selfish consideration to swerve from his duty. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 9] p. 168, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The character of Daniel is presented to the world as a striking example of what God's grace can make of men fallen by nature and corrupted by sin. The record of his noble, self-denying life is an encouragement to our common humanity. From it we may gather strength to nobly resist temptation, and firmly, and in the grace of meekness, stand for the right under the severest trial. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 10] p. 168, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Daniel might have found a plausible excuse to depart from his strictly temperate habits; but the approbation of God was dearer to him than the favor of the most powerful earthly potentate,--dearer even than life itself. Having by his courteous conduct obtained favor with Melzar, the officer in charge of the Hebrew youth, Daniel made a request that they might not eat of the king's meat, or drink of his wine. Melzar feared that should he comply with this request, he might incur the displeasure of the king, and thus endanger his own life. Like many at the present day, he thought that an abstemious diet would render these youth pale and sickly in appearance and deficient in muscular strength, while the luxurious food from the king's table would make them ruddy and beautiful, and would impart superior physical activity. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 11] p. 168, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Daniel requested that the matter be decided by a ten days' trial,--the Hebrew youth during this brief period being permitted to eat of simple food, while their companions partook of the king's dainties. The request was finally granted, and then Daniel felt assured that he had gained his case. Although but a youth, he had seen the injurious

effects of wine and luxurious living upon physical and mental health. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 12] p. 168, Para. 5, [1881MS].

At the end of the ten days the result was found to be quite the opposite of Melzar's expectations. Not only in personal appearance, but in physical activity and mental vigor, those who had been temperate in their habits exhibited a marked superiority over their companions who had indulged appetite. As a result of this trial, Daniel and his associates were permitted to continue their simple diet during the whole course of their training for the duties of the kingdom. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 13] p. 169, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The Lord regarded with approval the firmness and self-denial of these Hebrew youth, and his blessing attended them. He "gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams." At the expiration of the three years of training, when their ability and acquirements were tested by the king, he "found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore stood they before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm." [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 14] p. 169, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Here is a lesson for all, but especially for the young. A strict compliance with the requirements of God is beneficial to the health of body and mind. In order to reach the highest standard of moral and intellectual attainments, it is necessary to seek wisdom and strength from God, and to observe strict temperance in all the habits of life. In the experience of Daniel and his companions we have an instance of the triumph of principle over temptation to indulge the appetite. It shows us that through religious principle young men may triumph over the lusts of the flesh, and remain true to God's requirements, even though it cost them a great sacrifice. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 15] p. 169, Para. 3, [1881MS].

What if Daniel and his companions had made a compromise with those heathen officers, and had yielded to the pressure of the occasion, by eating and drinking as was customary with the Babylonians? That single instance of departure from principle would have weakened their sense of right and their abhorrence of wrong. Indulgence of appetite would have involved the sacrifice of physical vigor, clearness of intellect, and spiritual power. One wrong step would probably have led to others, until, their connection with Heaven being severed, they would have been swept away by temptation. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 16] p. 169, Para. 4, [1881MS].

God has said, "Them that honor me, I will honor." While Daniel clung to God with unwavering trust, the spirit of prophetic power came upon him. While he was instructed of man in the duties of court life, he was taught of God to read the mysteries of future ages, and to present to coming generations, through figures and similitudes, the wonderful things that would come to pass in the last days. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 17] p. 169, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The life of Daniel is an inspired illustration of what constitutes a sanctified character. Bible sanctification has to do with the whole man. Paul writes to his Thessalonian brethren, "And the very God of

peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Paul did not exhort his brethren to aim at a standard which it was impossible for them to reach. He did not pray that they might have blessings which it was not the will of God to give. He knew that all who would be fitted to meet Christ in peace must possess a pure and holy character. "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air; but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." "What ! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 18] p. 170, Para. 1, [1881MS].

It is impossible for any to enjoy the blessing of sanctification while they are selfish and gluttonous. These groan under a burden of infirmities because of wrong habits of eating and drinking, which do violence to the laws of life and health. Many are enfeebling their digestive organs by indulging perverted appetite. The power of the human constitution to resist the abuses put upon it is wonderful; but persistent wrong habits in excessive eating and drinking will enfeeble every function of the body. Let these feeble ones consider what they might have been, had they lived temperately, and promoted health instead of abusing it. In the gratification of perverted appetite and passion, even professed Christians cripple nature in her work, and lessen physical, mental, and moral power. Some who are doing this, claim to be sanctified to God; but such a claim is without foundation. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 19] p. 170, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Paul writes to his Christian converts, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Specific directions were given to ancient Israel that no defective or diseased animal should be presented as an offering to God. Only the most perfect were to be selected for this purpose. The Lord, through the prophet Malachi, most severely reprov'd his people for departing from these instructions. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 20] p. 170, Para. 3, [1881MS].

"A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master; if then I be a father, where is mine honor? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name? Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the Lord is contemptible. And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the Lord of hosts. Ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering; should I accept this of your hand? saith the Lord." [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 21] p. 170, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Let us give careful heed to these warnings and reproofs. Though addressed to ancient Israel, they are no less applicable to the people

of God today. And we should consider the words of the apostle in which he appeals to his brethren, by the mercies of God, to present their bodies "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God." This is true sanctification. It is not merely a theory, an emotion, or a form of words, but a living, active principle, entering into the everyday life. It requires that our habits of eating, drinking, and dressing, be such as to secure the preservation of physical, mental, and moral health, that we may present to the Lord our bodies--not an offering corrupted by wrong habits, but--"a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God." [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 22] p. 171, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Let none who profess godliness regard with indifference the health of the body, and flatter themselves that intemperance is no sin, and will not affect their spirituality. A close sympathy exists between the physical and the moral nature. The standard of virtue is elevated or degraded by the physical habits. Excessive eating of the best of food will produce a morbid condition of the moral feelings. And if the food is not the most healthful, the effects will be still more injurious. Any habit which does not promote healthful action in the human system degrades the higher and nobler faculties. Wrong habits of eating and drinking lead to errors in thought and action. Indulgence of appetite strengthens the animal propensities, giving them the ascendancy over the mental and spiritual powers. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 23] p. 171, Para. 2, [1881MS].

"Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul," is the language of the apostle Peter. Many regard this warning as applicable only to the licentious; but it has a broader meaning. It guards against every injurious gratification of appetite or passion. It is a most forcible warning against the use of such stimulants and narcotics as tea, coffee, tobacco, alcohol, and morphine. These indulgences may well be classed among the lusts that exert a pernicious influence upon moral character. The earlier these hurtful habits are formed, the more firmly will they hold their victim in slavery to lust, and the more certainly will they lower the standard of spirituality. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 24] p. 171, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Bible teaching will make but a feeble impression upon those whose faculties are benumbed by indulgence of appetite. Thousands will sacrifice not only health and life, but their hope of Heaven, before they will wage war against their own perverted appetites. One lady who for many years claimed to be sanctified, made the statement that if she must give up her pipe or Heaven she would say, "Farewell, Heaven, I cannot overcome my love for my pipe." This idol had been enshrined in the soul, leaving to Jesus a subordinate place. Yet this woman claimed to be wholly the Lord's! [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 25] p. 171, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Wherever they may be, those who are truly sanctified will elevate the moral standard by preserving correct physical habits, and, like Daniel, presenting to others an example of temperance and self-denial. Every depraved appetite becomes a warring lust. Everything that conflicts with natural law creates a diseased condition of the soul. The indulgence of appetite produces a dyspeptic stomach, a torpid liver, a clouded brain, and thus perverts the temper and spirit of the man. And these enfeebled powers are offered to God, who refused to accept the victims for sacrifice unless they were without a blemish! It is our

duty to bring our appetite and our habits of life into conformity to natural law. If the bodies offered upon Christ's altar were examined with the close scrutiny to which the Jewish sacrifices were subjected, who, with our present habits, would be accepted? [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 26] p. 172, Para. 1, [1881MS].

With what care should Christians regulate their habits, that they may preserve the full vigor of every faculty to give to the service of Christ. If we would be sanctified, in soul, body, and spirit, we must live in conformity to the divine law. The heart cannot preserve consecration to God while the appetites and passions are indulged at the expense of health and life. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 27] p. 172, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Those who violate the laws upon which health depends, must suffer the penalty. By intemperance in eating and drinking and dressing, they lessen physical, mental, and moral power, so that their bodies are an offering which the Lord cannot accept. They have so limited their abilities in every sense that they cannot properly discharge their duties to their fellow men, and they utterly fail to answer the claims of God. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 28] p. 172, Para. 3, [1881MS].

When Lord Palmerston, Premier of England, was petitioned by the Scotch clergy to appoint a day of fasting and prayer to avert the cholera, he replied, in effect, "Cleanse and disinfect your streets and houses, promote cleanliness and health among the poor, and see that they are plentifully supplied with good food and raiment, and employ right sanitary measures generally, and you will have no occasion to fast and pray. Nor will the Lord hear your prayers, while these, his preventives, remain unheeded." [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 29] p. 172, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Paul's inspired warnings against self-indulgence are sounding along the line down to our time. He calls upon us to practice temperance in all things; for unless we do this we endanger the salvation of the soul: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin." He exhorts, "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 30] p. 172, Para. 5, [1881MS].

He presents for our encouragement the freedom enjoyed by the truly sanctified: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." He charges the Galatians to "walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." He names some of the forms of fleshly lust,--"idolatry, drunkenness, and such like." And after mentioning the fruits of the Spirit, among which is temperance, he adds, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts." [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 31] p. 173, Para. 1, [1881MS].

If James had seen his brethren using tobacco, he would have denounced the practice as "earthly, sensual, and devilish." As I have seen men who claimed to enjoy the blessing of entire sanctification, while they

were slaves to tobacco, spitting and defiling everything around them, I have thought, How would Heaven appear with tobacco users in it? The lips that were taking the precious name of Christ were defiled by tobacco spittle, the breath was polluted with the stench, and even the linen was defiled; the soul that loved this uncleanness and enjoyed this poisonous atmosphere must also be defiled. The sign was hung upon the outside, testifying of what was within. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 32] p. 173, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Men professing godliness offer their bodies upon Satan's altar, and burn the incense of tobacco to his Satanic majesty. Does this statement seem severe? The offering must be presented to some deity. As God is pure and holy, and will accept nothing defiling its character, he refuses this expensive, filthy, and unholy sacrifice; therefore we conclude that Satan is the one who claims the honor. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 33] p. 173, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Jesus died to rescue man from the grasp of Satan. He came to set us free by the blood of his atoning sacrifice. The man who has become the property of Jesus Christ, and whose body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, will not be enslaved by the pernicious habit of tobacco using. His powers belong to Christ, who has bought him with the price of blood. His property is the Lord's. How, then, can he be guiltless in expending everyday the Lord's intrusted capital to gratify an appetite which has no foundation in nature? [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 34] p. 173, Para. 4, [1881MS].

An enormous sum is yearly squandered for this indulgence, while souls are perishing for the word of life. How can Christians who are enlightened upon this subject, continue to rob God in tithes and offerings used to sustain the gospel, while they offer on the altar of destroying lust, in the use of tobacco, more than they give to relieve the poor or to supply the wants of God's cause? If they are truly sanctified, every hurtful lust will be overcome. Then all these channels of needless expense will be turned to the Lord's treasury, and Christians will take the lead in self-denial, in self-sacrifice, and in temperance. Then they will be the light of the world. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 35] p. 173, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Tea and coffee, as well as tobacco, have an injurious effect upon the system. Tea is intoxicating; though less in degree, its effect is the same in character as that of spirituous liquors. Coffee has a greater tendency to becloud the intellect and benumb the energies. It is not so powerful as tobacco, but is similar in its effects. The arguments brought against tobacco may also be urged against the use of tea and coffee. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 36] p. 174, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Those who are in the habit of using tea, coffee, tobacco, opium, or spirituous liquors, cannot worship God when they are deprived of the accustomed indulgence. Let them, while deprived of these stimulants, engage in the worship of God, and divine grace would be powerless to animate, enliven, or spiritualize their prayers or their testimonies. These professed Christians should consider the means of their enjoyment. Is it from above, or from beneath? [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 37] p. 174, Para. 2, [1881MS].

To a tobacco user, everything is insipid and lifeless without the

darling indulgence. Its use has deadened the natural sensibilities of body and mind, and he is not susceptible of the influence of the Spirit of God. In the absence of the usual stimulant, he has a hungering and yearning of body and soul, not for righteousness, not for holiness, not for God's presence, but for his cherished idol. In the indulgence of hurtful lusts, professed Christians are daily enfeebling their powers, making it impossible to glorify God. Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 01-25-81 para. 38] p. 174, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Text: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. 5:23. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 1] p. 174, Para. 4, [1881MS].

In the same year that Daniel and his companions entered the service of the king of Babylon, events occurred that severely tested the integrity of these youthful Hebrews, and proved before an idolatrous nation the power and faithfulness of the God of Israel. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 2] p. 174, Para. 5, [1881MS].

While King Nebuchadnezzar was looking forward with anxious forebodings to the future, he had a remarkable dream, by which "he was greatly troubled, and his sleep brake from him." But although this vision of the night made a deep impression on his mind, he found it impossible to recall the particulars. He applied to his astrologers and magicians,--a class of impostors who professed to have power to reveal secret events,--and with promises of great wealth and honor commanded them to tell him his dream and its interpretation. But they said, "Tell thy servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation." [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 3] p. 174, Para. 6, [1881MS].

Here their deceptive character was clearly exposed. The king knew that if they could really tell the interpretation, they could tell the dream as well. The Lord had in his providence given the king this dream, and had caused the particulars to be forgotten, while the fearful impression was left upon his mind, in order to expose the pretensions of the wise men of Babylon. The monarch saw through their subterfuge, and was very angry, threatening that every one of them should be slain if in a given time the dream was not made known. Daniel and his companions were to perish with the false prophets; but, taking his life in his hand, Daniel ventures to enter the presence of the king, begging that time may be granted that he may show the dream and the interpretation. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 4] p. 175, Para. 1, [1881MS].

To this request the monarch accedes; and now Daniel gathers his three companions, and together they take the matter before God, seeking for wisdom from the Source of light and knowledge. Although they were in the king's court, surrounded with temptation, they did not forget their responsibility to God. They were strong in the consciousness that his providence had placed them where they were; that they were doing his work,--meeting the demands of truth and duty. They had confidence toward God. They had turned to him for strength when in perplexity and danger, and he had been to them an ever present help in time of need. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 5] p. 175, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The servants of God did not plead with him in vain. They had honored him, and in the hour of trial he honors them. The secret was revealed

to Daniel, and he hastens to request an interview with the king. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 6] p. 175, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The Jewish captive stands before the monarch of the most powerful empire the sun had ever shone upon. The king is in great distress amid all his riches and glory; but the youthful exile is peaceful and happy in his God. Now, if ever, is the time for Daniel to exalt himself,--to make prominent his own goodness and superior wisdom. But his first effort is to disclaim all honor for himself, and to exalt God as the Source of wisdom:-- [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 7] p. 175, Para. 4, [1881MS].

"The secret which the king hath demanded, cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king; but there is a God in Heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." The king listens with solemn attention as every particular of the dream is reproduced, and when the interpretation is faithfully given, he feels that he can rely upon it as a divine revelation. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 8] p. 175, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The solemn truths conveyed in this vision of the night, made a deep impression on the sovereign's mind, and in humility and awe he fell down and worshiped, saying, "Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets." [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 9] p. 175, Para. 6, [1881MS].

Light, direct from Heaven, had been permitted to shine upon King Nebuchadnezzar, and for a little time he was influenced by the fear of God. But a few years of prosperity filled his heart with pride, and he forgot his acknowledgment of the living God. He resumed his idol worship with increased zeal and bigotry. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 10] p. 175, Para. 7, [1881MS].

From the treasures obtained in war, he made a golden image to represent the one that he had seen in his dream, setting it up in the plain of Dura, and commanding all the rulers and the people to worship it, on pain of death. This statue was about ninety feet in height and nine in breadth, and in the eyes of that idolatrous people it presented a most imposing and majestic appearance. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 11] p. 176, Para. 1, [1881MS].

A proclamation was issued, calling upon all the officers of the kingdom to assemble at the dedication of the image, and at the sound of the musical instruments, to bow down and worship it. Should any fail to do this, they were immediately to be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 12] p. 176, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The appointed day has come, and the vast company is assembled, when word is brought to the king that the three Hebrews whom he had set over the province of Babylon, had refused to worship the image. These are Daniel's three companions, who had been called by the king, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Full of rage, the monarch calls them before him, and pointing to the angry furnace, tells them the punishment that will be theirs if they refuse obedience to his will. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 13] p. 176, Para. 3, [1881MS].

But all the crowned monarchs of earth could not turn these men from their allegiance to the great Ruler of nations. They had learned from the history of their fathers that disobedience to God is dishonor, disaster, and ruin; that the fear of the Lord is not only the beginning of wisdom, but the foundation of all true prosperity. They look with calmness upon the fiery furnace and the idolatrous throng. They have trusted in God, and he will not fail them now. Their answer is respectful, but decided,--"Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 14] p. 176, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The proud tyrant is surrounded by his great men, the officers of the government, and the army that has conquered nations; and all unite in applauding him as having the wisdom and power of the gods. In the midst of this imposing display stand the three youthful Hebrews, steadily persisting in their refusal to obey the king's decree. They had been obedient to the laws of Babylon, so far as these did not conflict with the claims of God; but they would not be swayed a hair's breadth from the duty they owed to their Creator. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 15] p. 176, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The king's wrath knew no limits. In the very height of his power and glory, to be thus defied by these representatives of a despised and captive race, was an insult which his proud spirit could not endure. The fiery furnace had been heated seven times more than it was wont, and into it were cast the Hebrew exiles. So furious were the flames, that the men who cast them in were burned to death. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 16] p. 176, Para. 6, [1881MS].

Suddenly the countenance of the king paled with terror. His eyes were fixed upon the glowing flames, and turning to his lords he said, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" The answer was, "True, O king." And now, his terror and amazement increased, the monarch exclaimed, "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 17] p. 177, Para. 1, [1881MS].

When the Son of God manifests himself to men, an unseen power speaks to the soul that this is God. And before his majesty, kings and nobles tremble, and acknowledge the superiority of the living God over every earthly power. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 18] p. 177, Para. 2, [1881MS].

With feelings of remorse and shame, the king exclaimed, "Ye servants of the most high God, come forth." And they obeyed, showing themselves unhurt before that vast multitude, not even the smell of fire being upon their garments. This miracle produced a striking change in the minds of the people. The great golden image, set up with such display, was forgotten. The king published a decree that any one speaking against the God of these men should be put to death; "because there is no other god that can deliver after this sort." [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 19] p. 177, Para. 3, [1881MS].

These three Hebrews possessed genuine sanctification. True Christian principle will not stop to weigh consequences. It does not ask, What will people think of me if I do this? or how will it affect my worldly prospects if I do that? With the most intense longing, the children of God desire to know what he would have them do, that their works may

glorify him. The Lord has made ample provision that the heart and life of all his followers may be controlled by divine grace, that they may be as burning and shining lights in the world. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 20] p. 177, Para. 4, [1881MS].

These faithful Hebrews possessed great natural ability and intellectual culture, and they occupied a high position of honor; but all these advantages did not lead them to forget God. All their powers were yielded to the sanctifying influence of divine grace. By their godly example, their steadfast integrity, they showed forth the praises of Him who had called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. In their wonderful deliverance was displayed, before that vast assembly, the power and majesty of God. Jesus placed himself by their side in the fiery furnace, and by the glory of his presence convinced the proud king of Babylon that it could be no other than the Son of God. The light of Heaven had been shining forth from Daniel and his companions, until all their associates understood the faith which ennobled their lives and beautified their characters. By the deliverance of his faithful servants, the Lord declares that he will take his stand with the oppressed, and overthrow, all earthly powers that would exalt their own glory and trample under foot the God of Heaven. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 21] p. 177, Para. 5, [1881MS].

What a lesson is here given to the faint-hearted, the vacillating, the cowardly in the cause of God. What encouragement is given to those who will not be swayed from duty by threats or peril. These faithful, steadfast characters exemplify sanctification, while they have no thought of claiming the high honor. The amount of good which may be accomplished by comparatively obscure but devoted Christians, cannot be estimated until the life records shall be made known, when the Judgment shall sit and the books be opened. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 22] p. 178, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Christ identifies his interest with this class; he is not ashamed to call them brethren. There should be hundreds where there is now one among us, so closely allied to God, their lives in such close conformity to his will, that they would be bright and shining lights, sanctified wholly, in soul, body, and spirit. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 23] p. 178, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The great conflict is still between the children of light and the children of darkness. Those who name the name of Christ should shake off the lethargy that enfeebles their efforts, and should meet the momentous responsibilities that devolve upon them. All who do this may expect the power of God to be revealed in them. The Son of God, the world's Redeemer, will be represented in their words and in their works, and God's name will be glorified. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 24] p. 178, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Nebuchadnezzar had another dream, which filled his heart with terror. In a vision of the night he saw a great tree growing in the midst of the earth, towering up to the heavens, and its branches stretching to the ends of the earth. In it the fowls of the air dwelt, and under it the beasts of the field found shelter. As the king gazed upon that lofty tree, he beheld a "watcher, even a holy one,"--a divine messenger, similar in appearance to the One who walked with the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace. This heavenly being approached the tree,

and in a loud voice cried, "Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit; let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches; nevertheless, leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass." [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 25] p. 178, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The skill of the wise men proving ineffectual, Daniel is sent for to interpret the dream. Its signification filled him with astonishment, and "his thoughts troubled him." He faithfully told the king that the fate of the tree was emblematic of his own downfall; that he would lose his reason, and, forsaking the abodes of men, would find a home with the beasts of the field, and that he would remain in this condition for the period of seven years. He urged the proud monarch to repent and turn to God, and by good works avert the threatened calamity. But the king's heart had become hardened, and he felt independent of God. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 26] p. 178, Para. 5, [1881MS].

About one year after he had received the divine warning, the king was walking in his palace and thinking of his power as ruler of earth's greatest kingdom, when he exclaimed, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 27] p. 179, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The proud boast had scarcely left his lips, when a voice from Heaven told him that God's appointed time of judgment had come. In a moment his reason was taken away, and he became as a beast. For seven years he was thus degraded. At the end of this time his reason was restored to him, and then looking up in humility to the great God of Heaven, he recognized the divine hand in this chastisement, and was again restored to his throne. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 28] p. 179, Para. 2, [1881MS].

In a public proclamation, King Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged his guilt, and the great mercy of God in his restoration. This was the last act of his life as recorded in Sacred History. Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 02-01-81 para. 29] p. 179, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Text: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. 5:23. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 1] p. 179, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Belshazzar was acquainted with the dealings of God with Nebuchadnezzar, but this knowledge had no effect upon his own course. He blindly clung to the worship of idols, and gave himself up to sensual indulgence. It was not long before reverses came. He had been defeated in battle by Cyrus, and for two years had been besieged in the city of Babylon. Within that seemingly impregnable fortress, with its massive walls and its gates of brass, protected by the river Euphrates, and supplied with provisions for a twenty years' siege, the voluptuous monarch felt secure, and passed his time in mirth and revelry. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 2] p. 179, Para. 5, [1881MS].

One night he made a great feast to a thousand of his lords. All the attractions that wealth and royal power could command, combined to give splendor to the scene. Everything that could administer to the lusts of the flesh was there. Princes and statesmen drank wine like water, and

reveled under its maddening influence. The king had commanded to bring to that sacrilegious feast the golden and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple at Jerusalem, and which had been consecrated to the service of God, and employed by holy men in his worship. These were now to be used by the wicked revelers. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 3] p. 179, Para. 6, [1881MS].

While they were that night in the midst of idolatrous mirth, the king's countenance suddenly pales, and he seems paralyzed with terror; for lo! a bloodless hand is tracing mystic characters on the wall over against him. The revelers discern the curious and, to them, unintelligible writing. The exciting merriment dies away, and a painful silence falls upon the throng. The king's thoughts troubled him, "the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another." Trembling with alarm, he "cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. And the king spake, and said to the wise men of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and shew me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed in scarlet, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom." But these men are no more able to interpret the mystic characters traced by the hand of an angel of God than they were to interpret the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 4] p. 179, Para. 7, [1881MS].

The terror of the king increases. He is conscious that this writing is a rebuke of his impious feast, and yet he cannot tell its exact import. The queen then reminds him that there is a man in his kingdom "in whom is the spirit of the holy gods," and that in the days of his father, "light and understanding and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods was found in him;" whom his father "made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers; forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation." [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 5] p. 180, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Then is Daniel brought before the king without delay, and the monarch promises him great rewards if he will interpret the writing. Daniel looks upon that wicked throng bearing evidence of intemperate feasting and revelry. He stands before them in the quiet dignity of a servant of the most high God, not to speak words of flattery, as was the custom of the professedly wise men of the kingdom, but to speak the truth of God. Sternly disclaiming all desire for rewards or honor, he says, "Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation." [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 6] p. 180, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Daniel then proceeds to speak of the Lord's dealings with Nebuchadnezzar,--the dominion and glory bestowed upon him, the divine judgment for his pride, and his subsequent acknowledgment of the power and mercy of the God of Israel; and then in the most direct and emphatic words he rebukes the great wickedness of the impious king,-- "And thou, his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of Heaven." [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 7] p. 180, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Daniel then gave the interpretation of the mystic writing: "God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it." "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." That very night the words of the prophet were fulfilled. The city was occupied, the king slain, and the kingdom taken, by the Medes and Persians. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 8] p. 180, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Darius now took possession of the throne of Babylon, and at once proceeded to reorganize the government. He "set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom; and over these, three presidents; of whom Daniel was first." And "Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm." The honors bestowed upon Daniel excited the jealousy of the leading men of the kingdom. The presidents and princes sought to find occasion against him concerning the kingdom. "But they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him." [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 9] p. 180, Para. 5, [1881MS].

What a lesson is here presented for all Christians. The keen eyes of jealousy were fixed upon Daniel day after day; their watchings were sharpened by hatred; yet not a word or act of his life could they make appear wrong. And still he made no claim to sanctification; but he did that which was infinitely better,--he lived a holy, sanctified life. The true test of sanctification is the daily deportment. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 10] p. 181, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The more blameless the life of Daniel, the greater was the hatred excited against him by his enemies. They were filled with madness, because they could find nothing in his moral character or in the discharge of his duties, upon which to base a complaint against him. "Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God." Three times a day, Daniel prayed to the God of Heaven. This was the only accusation that could be brought against him. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 11] p. 181, Para. 2, [1881MS].

A scheme is now devised to accomplish his destruction. His enemies assembled at the palace, and asked the king to pass a decree, that no person in the whole realm should ask anything of either God or man, except of Darius the king, for the space of thirty days, and that any violation of this edict should be punished by casting the offender into the den of lions. The king knew nothing of the hatred of these men toward Daniel, and did not suppose that the decree would in any way injure him. Through flattery they made the monarch believe it would be greatly to his honor to pass such a decree. With a smile of Satanic triumph upon their faces, these men come forth from the presence of the king; and rejoice together, over the trap which they have laid for the servant of God. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 12] p. 181, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The decree goes forth from the king. Daniel is aware of all that has been done. He is acquainted with the purpose of his enemies to ruin him. But he does not change his course in a single particular. With calmness he goes about his accustomed duties, and at the hour of prayer he goes to his chamber, and with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he

offers his petitions to the God of Heaven. By his course of action, he takes the position that no king or prince has the right to come between him and his God, and tell him to whom he should or should not pray. Noble man of principle! he stands before the world today a praiseworthy example of Christian boldness and fidelity. He turns to God with all his heart, although he knows that death is the penalty for his devotion. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 13] p. 181, Para. 4, [1881MS].

His adversaries watch him an entire day. Three times he has repaired to his chamber, and three times the voice of earnest intercession has been heard. The next morning the complaint is made to the king that Daniel, one of the captives of Judah, has set at defiance his decree. When the monarch heard these words, his eyes were at once opened to see the snare that had been set. He is sorely displeased with himself for having passed such a decree, and labors till the going down of the sun to devise some plan by which Daniel may be delivered. But the prophet's enemies had anticipated this, and they came before the king with these words: "Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, that no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 14] p. 182, Para. 1, [1881MS].

"Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God, whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee." A stone is laid upon the mouth of the den, and sealed with the royal seal. "Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting; neither were instruments of music brought before him; and his sleep went from him." [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 15] p. 182, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Early in the morning the monarch hastened to the den of lions, and cried, "Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?" The voice of the prophet is heard in reply, "O king, live forever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me; forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 16] p. 182, Para. 3, [1881MS].

"Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God." Thus was the servant of God delivered. And the snare which his enemies had laid for his destruction proved to be their own ruin. At the command of the king they were cast into the den, and instantly devoured by the wild beasts. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 17] p. 182, Para. 4, [1881MS].

As the time approached for the close of the seventy years' captivity, Daniel's mind became greatly exercised upon the prophecies of Jeremiah. He saw that the time was at hand when God would give his chosen people another trial; and with fasting, humiliation, and prayer, he importuned the God of Heaven in behalf of Israel, in these words: "O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments'; we have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments; neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy

name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land." [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 18] p. 182, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Notice these words. Daniel does not proclaim his own fidelity before the Lord. Instead of claiming to be pure and holy, he identifies himself with the really sinful of Israel. The wisdom which God imparted to him was as far superior to the wisdom of the wise men of the world as the light of the sun shining in the heavens at noonday is brighter than the feeblest star. Yet ponder the prayer from the lips of this man so highly favored of Heaven. With deep humiliation, with tears, and with rending of heart, he pleads for himself and for his people. He lays his soul open before God, confessing his own vileness, and acknowledging the Lord's greatness and majesty. What earnestness and fervor characterize his supplications! He is coming nearer and nearer to God. The hand of faith is reached upward to grasp the never-failing promises of the Most High. His soul is wrestling in agony. And he has the evidence that his prayer is heard. He feels that victory is his. If we as a people would pray as Daniel prayed, and wrestle as he wrestled, humbling our souls before God, we should realize as marked answers to our petitions as were granted to Daniel. Hear how he presses his case at the court of "Heaven:-- [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 19] p. 183, Para. 1, [1881MS].

"O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name; for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God; for thy city and thy people are called by thy name. And whilst I was speaking and praying, and confessing *my sin* and the sin of my people, . . . even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation." [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 20] p. 183, Para. 2, [1881MS].

As Daniel's prayer is going forth, the angel Gabriel comes sweeping down from the heavenly courts, to tell him that his petitions are heard and answered. This mighty angel has been commissioned to give him skill and understanding,--to open before him the mysteries of future ages. Thus, while earnestly seeking to know and understand the truth, Daniel was brought into communion with Heaven's delegated messenger. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 21] p. 183, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The man of God was praying, not for a flight of happy feeling, but for a knowledge of the divine will. And he desired this knowledge, not merely for himself, but for his people. His great burden was for Israel, who were not, in the strictest sense, keeping the law of God. He acknowledges that all their misfortunes have come upon them in consequence of their transgressions of that holy law. He says, "We have sinned, we have done wickedly. . . . Because for our sins and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us." They had lost their peculiar, holy character as God's chosen people. "Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate." Daniel's heart turns with intense longing to the desolate sanctuary of God. He knows that its prosperity can be restored only as Israel shall repent of their transgressions of God's law, and become humble, and faithful, and

obedient. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 22] p. 183, Para. 4, [1881MS].

In answer to his petition, Daniel received not only the light and truth which he and his people most needed, but a view of the great events of the future, even to the advent of the world's Redeemer. Those who claim to be sanctified, while they have no desire to search the Scriptures, or to wrestle with God in prayer for a clearer understanding of Bible truth, know not what true sanctification is. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 23] p. 184, Para. 1, [1881MS].

All who believe with the heart the word of God will hunger and thirst for a knowledge of his will. God is the author of truth. He enlightens the darkened understanding, and gives to the human mind power to grasp and comprehend the truths which he has revealed. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 24] p. 184, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Daniel talked with God. Heaven was opened before him. But the high honors granted him were the result of humiliation and earnest seeking. He did not think, as do many at the present day, that it is no matter what we believe, if we are only honest, and love Jesus. True love for Jesus will lead to the most close and earnest inquiry as to what is truth. Christ prayed that his disciples might be sanctified through the truth. He who is too indolent to make anxious, prayerful search for truth, will be left to receive errors which shall prove the ruin of his soul. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 25] p. 184, Para. 3, [1881MS].

At the time of Gabriel's visit, the prophet Daniel was unable to receive further instruction; but a few years afterward, desiring to know more of subjects not yet fully explained, he again set himself to seek light and wisdom from God. "In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all. . . . Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz. His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in color to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude." [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 26] p. 184, Para. 4, [1881MS].

No less a personage than the Son of God appeared to Daniel. This description is similar to that given by John when Christ was revealed to him upon the Isle of Patmos. Our Lord now comes with another heavenly messenger to teach Daniel what would take place in the latter days. This knowledge was given to Daniel and recorded by inspiration for us upon whom the ends of the world are come. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 27] p. 184, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The great truths revealed by the world's Redeemer are for those who search for truth as for hid treasures. Daniel was an aged man. His life had been passed amid the fascinations of a heathen court, his mind cumbered with the affairs of a great empire; yet he turns aside from all these to afflict his soul before God, and seek a knowledge of the purposes of the Most High. And in response to his supplications, light from the heavenly courts was communicated for those who should live in the latter days. With what earnestness, then, should we seek God, that he may open our understanding to comprehend the truths brought to us from Heaven. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 28] p. 185, Para. 1, [1881MS].

"And I Daniel alone saw the vision ; for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. . . . And there remained no strength in me; for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength." Such will be the experience of every one who is truly sanctified. The clearer their views of the greatness, glory, and perfection of Christ, the more vividly will they see their own weakness and imperfection. They will have no disposition to claim a sinless character; that which has appeared right and comely in themselves will, in contrast with Christ's purity and glory, appear only as unworthy and corruptible. It is when men are separated from God, when they have very indistinct views of Christ, that they say, "I am sinless; I am sanctified." [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 29] p. 185, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Gabriel then appeared to the prophet, and thus addressed him; "O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright; for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel; for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words." [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 30] p. 185, Para. 3, [1881MS].

What great honor was shown to Daniel by the Majesty of Heaven! He comforts his trembling servant, and assures him that his prayer was heard in Heaven, and that in answer to that fervent petition, the angel Gabriel was sent to affect the heart of the Persian king. The monarch had resisted the impressions of the Spirit of God during the three weeks while Daniel was fasting and praying, but Heaven's Prince, the archangel, Michael, was sent to turn the heart of the stubborn king to take some decided action to answer the prayer of Daniel. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 31] p. 185, Para. 4, [1881MS].

"And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb. And behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips. . . . And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee; be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me." So great was the divine glory revealed to Daniel that he could not endure the sight. Then the messenger of Heaven veiled the brightness of his presence and appeared to the prophet as "one like the similitude of the sons of men." By his divine power he strengthened this man of integrity and of faith, to hear the message sent to him from God. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 32] p. 185, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Daniel was a devoted servant of the Most High. His long life was filled up with noble deeds of service for his Master. His purity of character, and unwavering fidelity, are equaled only by his humility of heart and his contrition before God. We repeat, The life of Daniel is an inspired illustration of true sanctification. Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 02-08-81 para. 33] p. 186, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Text: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body he preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. 5:23. [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para.

1] p. 186, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The apostle John was distinguished above his brethren as "the disciple whom Jesus loved." While not in the slightest degree cowardly, weak, or vacillating in character, he possessed an amiable disposition, and a warm, loving heart, capable of the deepest and most earnest devotion. He seems to have enjoyed, in a preeminent sense, the friendship of Christ, and he received many tokens of the Saviour's confidence and love. He was one of the three permitted to witness Christ's glory upon the mount of transfiguration, and his agony in Gethsemane; and to the care of John our Lord confided his mother in those last hours of anguish upon the cross. [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 2] p. 186, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The Saviour's affection for the beloved disciple was returned with all the strength of ardent devotion. John clung to Christ as the vine clings to the stately pillar. For the Master's sake he braved the dangers of the judgment hall, and lingered about the cross; and at the tidings that Christ had risen, he hastened to the sepulcher, in his zeal outstripping even the impetuous Peter. [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 3] p. 186, Para. 4, [1881MS].

John's affection for his Master was not a mere human friendship, but the love of a repentant sinner, who felt that he had been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. He esteemed it the highest honor to work and suffer in the service of his Lord. His love for Jesus led him to love all for whom Christ died. His religion was of a practical character. He reasoned that love to God would be manifested in love to his children. He was heard again and again to say, "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." "We love him because he first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" The apostle's life was in harmony with his teachings. The love which glowed in his heart for Christ, led him to put forth the most earnest, untiring labor for his fellow men, especially for his brethren in the Christian church. He was a powerful preacher, fervent, and deeply in earnest, and his words carried with them a weight of conviction. [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 4] p. 186, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The confiding love and unselfish devotion manifested in the life and character of John, present lessons of untold value to the Christian church. Some may represent him as possessing this love independent of divine grace; but John had, by nature, serious defects of character; he was proud and ambitious, and quick to resent slight and injury. [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 5] p. 187, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The depth and fervor of John's affection for the Master was not the cause of Christ's love for him, but the effect of that love. John desired to become like Jesus, and under the transforming influence of the love of Christ, he became meek and lowly of heart. Self was hid in Jesus. He was closely united to the Living Vine, and thus became a partaker of the divine nature. Such will ever be the result of communion with Christ. This is true sanctification. [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 6] p. 187, Para. 2, [1881MS].

There may be marked defects in the character; evil temper, irritable

disposition, envy, and jealousy may bear sway; yet if the man becomes a true disciple of Jesus, the power of divine grace will make him a new creature. Christ's love transforms, sanctifies him. But when persons profess to be Christians, and their religion does not make them better men and better women in all the relations of life,--living representatives of Christ in disposition and character,--they are none of his. [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 7] p. 187, Para. 3, [1881MS].

At one time, with several of his brethren, John engaged in a dispute as to which of their number should be accounted greatest. They did not intend their words to reach the ear of the Master; but Jesus read their hearts, and embraced the opportunity to give his disciples a lesson of humility. It was not only for the little group who listened to his words, but was to be recorded for the benefit of all his followers, to the close of time. "And he sat down, and called the twelve, and said unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all." [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 8] p. 187, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Those who possess the spirit of Christ will have no ambition to occupy a position above their brethren. It is those who are small in their own eyes who will be accounted great in the sight of God. "And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them; and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me; and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but Him that sent me." [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 9] p. 187, Para. 5, [1881MS].

What a precious lesson is this for all the followers of Christ! Those who overlook the life duties lying directly in their pathway, who neglect mercy and kindness, courtesy and love, to even a little child, are neglecting Christ. John felt the force of this lesson, and profited by it. [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 10] p. 187, Para. 6, [1881MS].

On another occasion, his brother James and himself had seen a man casting out devils in the name of Jesus, and because he did not immediately connect himself with their company, they decided that he had no right to do this work, and consequently forbade him. In the sincerity of his heart, John related the circumstance to the Master. Jesus said, "Forbid him not; for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part." [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 11] p. 187, Para. 7, [1881MS].

Again, James and John came to Jesus with a request that he would honor them by permitting one to sit at his right hand and the other at his left hand in his glory. The Saviour answered, "Ye know not what ye ask." How little do many of us understand the true import of our prayers! Oh! Jesus knew the infinite price at which that glory must be purchased, when he, "for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame." That joy was to see souls saved by his humiliation, his agony, and the shedding of his blood. [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 12] p. 188, Para. 1, [1881MS].

This was the glory which Christ was to receive, and which these two disciples had requested that they might be permitted to share. Jesus asked them, "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized

with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We can." [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 13] p. 188, Para. 2, [1881MS].

How little did they comprehend what that baptism signified! "Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized. But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared." [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 14] p. 188, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Jesus understood the motives which prompted the request, and thus reproved the pride and ambition of the two disciples: "The Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you; but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister; and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 15] p. 188, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Upon one occasion, Christ sent messengers before him into a village of the Samaritans, requesting the people to prepare refreshments for himself and his disciples. But when Christ approached the town, he appeared to be passing on toward Jerusalem. This aroused the enmity of the Samaritans, and instead of sending messengers to invite and even urge him to tarry with them, they withheld the courtesies which they would have given to a common wayfarer. Jesus never urges his presence upon any, and the Samaritans lost the blessing which would have been granted them, had they solicited him to be their guest. [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 16] p. 188, Para. 5, [1881MS].

We may wonder at this rude and uncourteous treatment of the Majesty of Heaven; but how often are we who profess to be the followers of Christ, guilty of the same neglect. Do we urge Jesus to take up his abode in our hearts and in our homes? He is full of love, of grace, of blessing, and stands ready to bestow these gifts upon us; but, like the Samaritans, we are frequently content without them. [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 17] p. 188, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The disciples were aware of the purpose of Christ to bless the Samaritans with his presence; and when they saw the coldness, jealousy, and positive disrespect shown to their Master, they were filled with surprise and indignation. James and John were especially stirred. That the Master whom they so highly revered should be thus treated, seemed to them a crime too great to be passed over without immediate punishment. These disciples said, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from Heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?" referring to the destruction of the Syrian captains and their companies sent out to take the prophet Elijah. [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 18] p. 189, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Jesus rebuked his disciples, saying, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of; for the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." John and his fellow disciples were in a school, in which Christ was teacher. Those who were ready to learn their mistakes, and anxious to improve in character, had ample opportunity. John treasured every lesson, and constantly sought to bring his character into harmony with the divine Pattern. The lessons

of Christ, setting forth meekness, humility, and love as essential to growth in grace and a fitness for his work, were of the highest value to John. These lessons are addressed to us as individuals and as brethren in the church, as well as to the first disciples of Christ. There is no sanctification without the grace of humility. [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 19] p. 189, Para. 2, [1881MS].

An instructive lesson may be drawn from the striking contrast between the character of John and that of Judas. John was a living illustration of sanctification. On the other hand, Judas possessed a form of godliness, while his character was more Satanic than divine. He professed to be a disciple of Christ, but in words and in works denied him. [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 20] p. 189, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Judas had the same precious opportunities as had John to study and to imitate the Pattern. He listened to the lessons of Christ, and his character might have been transformed by divine grace. But while John was earnestly warring against his own faults, and seeking to assimilate to Christ, Judas was violating his conscience, yielding to temptation, and fastening upon himself habits of dishonesty that would transform him into the image of Satan. [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 21] p. 189, Para. 4, [1881MS].

These two disciples represent the Christian world. All profess to be Christ's followers; but while one class walk in humility and meekness, learning of Jesus, the other show that they are not doers of the word, but hearers only. One class are sanctified through the truth; the other know nothing of the transforming power of divine grace. The former are dying daily to self, and are overcoming sin. The latter are indulging their own lusts, and becoming the servants of Satan. [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 22] p. 189, Para. 5, [1881MS].

John's early life was passed in the society of the rude and uncultivated fishermen of Galilee. He did not enjoy the training of the schools; but by association with Christ, the Great Teacher, he obtained the highest education which mortal man can receive. He drank eagerly at the fountain of wisdom, and then sought to lead others to that "well of water springing up into everlasting life." The simplicity of his words, the sublime power of the truths he uttered, and the spiritual fervor that characterized his teachings, gave him access to all classes. Yet even believers were unable to fully comprehend the sacred mysteries of divine truth unfolded in his discourses. He seemed to be constantly imbued with the Holy Spirit. He sought to bring the thoughts of the people up to grasp the unseen. The wisdom with which he spoke caused his words to drop as the dew, softening and subduing the soul. Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 02-15-81 para. 23] p. 190, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Text: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. 5:23. [Cf: RH 02-22-81 para. 1] p. 190, Para. 2, [1881MS].

After the ascension of Christ, John stands forth a faithful, ardent laborer for the Master. With others, he enjoyed the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and with fresh zeal and power he continued to speak to the people the words of life. He was threatened with imprisonment and death, but he would not be intimidated. [Cf: RH

02-22-81 para. 2] p. 190, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Multitudes from all classes come out to listen to the preaching of the apostles, and are healed of their diseases through the name of Jesus, that name so hated among the Jews. The priests and rulers are frantic in their opposition, as they see that the sick are healed, and Jesus is exalted as the Prince of life. They fear that soon the whole world will believe on him, and then accuse them of murdering the Mighty Healer. But the greater their efforts to stop this excitement, the more accept him and turn from the teachings of the scribes and Pharisees. They are filled with indignation, and laying hands upon the apostles, thrust them into the common prison. But the angel of the Lord, by night, opens the prison doors, brings them forth, and says, "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." [Cf: RH 02-22-81 para. 3] p. 190, Para. 4, [1881MS].

With fidelity and earnestness, John bore testimony for his Lord upon every suitable occasion. He saw that the times were full of peril for the church. Satanic delusions were existing everywhere. The minds of the people were wandering through the mazes of skepticism and deceptive doctrines. Some who pretended to be true to the cause of God were deceivers; they denied Christ and his gospel, and were bringing in damnable heresies and living in transgression of the divine law. [Cf: RH 02-22-81 para. 4] p. 190, Para. 5, [1881MS].

John's favorite theme was the infinite love of Christ. No man stood higher before the believers in his day, and before men of all classes, than did John. He believed in God as a child believes in a kind and tender father. He understood the character and work of Jesus; and when he saw his Jewish brethren groping their way without a ray of the Sun of Righteousness to illuminate their path, he longed to present to them Christ, the Light of the world. [Cf: RH 02-22-81 para. 5] p. 190, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The faithful apostle saw that their blindness, their pride, superstition, and ignorance of the Scriptures, were riveting upon their souls fetters which would never be broken. The prejudice and hatred against Christ which they obstinately cherished, was bringing ruin upon them as a nation, and destroying their hopes of everlasting life. But John continued to present Christ to them as the only way of salvation. The evidence that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah was so clear, that John declares no man need to walk in the darkness of error while such a light is proffered him. [Cf: RH 02-22-81 para. 6] p. 191, Para. 1, [1881MS].

John lived to see the gospel of Christ preached far and near, and thousands eagerly accepting its teachings. But he was filled with sadness as he perceived poisonous errors creeping into the church. Some who accepted Christ claimed that his love released them from obedience to the law of God. On the other hand, many taught that the letter of the law should be kept, also all the Jewish customs and ceremonies, and that this was sufficient for salvation, without the blood of Christ. They held that Christ was a good man, like the apostles, but denied his divinity. John saw the dangers to which the church would be exposed, should they receive these ideas, and he met them with promptness and decision. He wrote to a most honorable helper in the gospel, a lady of good repute and extensive influence:-- [Cf: RH 02-22-81 para. 7] p.

191, Para. 2, [1881MS].

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed is a partaker of his evil deeds." [Cf: RH 02-22-81 para. 8] p. 191, Para. 3, [1881MS].

John was not to prosecute his work without great hindrances, Satan was not idle. He instigated evil men to cut short the useful life of this man of God; but holy angels protected him from their assaults. John must stand as a faithful witness for Christ. The church in its peril needed his testimony. [Cf: RH 02-22-81 para. 9] p. 191, Para. 4, [1881MS].

By falsehood and misrepresentation the emissaries of Satan had sought to stir up opposition against John, and against the doctrine of Christ. In consequence, dissensions and heresies were imperiling the church. John met these errors unflinchingly. He hedged up the way of the adversaries of truth. He wrote and exhorted that the leaders in these heresies should not have the least encouragement. There are at the present day evils similar to those that threatened the prosperity of the early church, and the teachings of the apostle upon these points should be carefully heeded. "You must have charity," is the cry to be heard everywhere, especially from those who profess sanctification. But charity is too pure to cover an unconfessed sin. John's teachings are important for those who are living amid the perils of the last days. He had been intimately associated with Christ, he had listened to his teachings, and had witnessed his mighty miracles. He bore a convincing testimony, which made the falsehoods of his enemies of none effect. [Cf: RH 02-22-81 para. 10] p. 191, Para. 5, [1881MS].

John enjoyed the blessing of true sanctification. But mark, the apostle does not claim to be sinless; he is seeking perfection by walking in the light of God's countenance. He testifies that the man who pretends to know God, and yet breaks the divine law, gives the lie to his profession. "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." In this age of boasted liberality, these words of John would be branded as bigotry. But the apostle would teach us that while endeavoring to perfect Christian character, we are authorized to call sin and sinners by their right names,--that this is true charity. While loving the souls for whom Christ died, and laboring for their salvation, we should not make a compromise with sin. We are not to unite with the rebellious, and call this charity. God requires his people in this age of the world to stand as did John in his time, unflinchingly for the right, in opposition to soul destroying errors. [Cf: RH 02-22-81 para. 11] p. 192, Para. 1, [1881MS].

I have met many who claimed to live without sin. But when tested by God's word, these persons were found to be open transgressors of his holy law. The clearest evidences of the perpetuity and binding force of

the fourth commandment, failed to arouse the conscience. They could not deny the claims of God, but ventured to excuse themselves in breaking the Sabbath. They claimed to be sanctified, and to serve God on all days of the week. Many good people, they said, did not keep the Sabbath. As they were sanctified, no condemnation would rest upon them if they did not observe it. God was too merciful to punish us for not keeping the seventh day. They would be counted odd and singular in [the] community, should they observe the Sabbath, and would have no influence in the world. We must be subject to the powers that be. [Cf: RH 02-22-81 para. 12] p. 192, Para. 2, [1881MS].

A lady in New Hampshire bore her testimony in a public meeting, that the grace of God was ruling in her heart, and that she was wholly the Lord's. She then expressed her belief that this people were doing much good in arousing sinners to see their danger. She said, "The Sabbath that this people present to us, is the only Sabbath of the Bible;" and then stated that her mind had been very much exercised upon the subject. She saw great trials before her, which she must meet if she kept the seventh day. The next day, she came to meeting, and again bore her testimony, saying she had asked the Lord if she must keep the Sabbath, and he had told her she need not keep it. Her mind was now at rest upon that subject. She then gave a most stirring exhortation for all to come to the perfect love of Jesus, where there was no condemnation to the soul. [Cf: RH 02-22-81 para. 13] p. 192, Para. 3, [1881MS].

This woman did not possess genuine sanctification. It was not God who told her that she could be sanctified through disobedience to one of his plain commandments. God's law is sacred, and no one can transgress it with impunity. The being who told her that she could continue to transgress God's law and be sinless, was the prince of the powers of darkness,--the same who told Eve in Eden, through the serpent, "Thou shalt not surely die." Eve flattered herself that God was too kind to punish her for disobedience of his express commands. The same sophistry is urged by thousands in excuse of their disobedience of the fourth commandment. Those who have the mind of Christ will keep all of God's commandments, irrespective of circumstances. The Majesty of Heaven says, "I have kept my Father's commandments." Adam and Eve dared to transgress the Lord's requirements, and the terrible result of their sin should be a warning to us not to follow their example of disobedience. Christ prayed for his disciples in these words: "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." There is no genuine sanctification, except through obedience to the truth. Those who love God with all the heart will also love all his commandments. The sanctified heart is in harmony with the precepts of God's law; for they are holy, just, and good. [Cf: RH 02-22-81 para. 14] p. 193, Para. 1, [1881MS].

God's character has not changed. He is the same jealous God today as when he gave his law upon Sinai, and wrote it with his own finger on the tables of stone. Those who trample upon God's holy law may say, "I am sanctified;" but to be indeed sanctified, and to claim sanctification, are two different things. [Cf: RH 02-22-81 para. 15] p. 193, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The New Testament has not changed the law of God. The sacredness of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is as firmly established as the

throne of Jehovah. John writes, "Whosoever committeth sin, transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law. And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not; whosoever sinneth [transgresseth the law] hath not seen him, neither known him." We are authorized to hold in the same estimation as did the beloved disciple those who claim to abide in Christ, to be sanctified, while living in the transgression of God's law. He met with just such a class as we have to meet. He said, "Little children, let no man deceive you. He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning." Here the apostle speaks in plain terms, as he deemed the subject demanded. [Cf: RH 02-22-81 para. 16] p. 193, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The epistles of John breathe a spirit of love. But when he comes in contact with that class who break the law of God and yet claim that they are living without sin, he does not hesitate to warn them of their fearful deception. "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth; but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 02-22-81 para. 17] p. 194, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Text: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. 5:23. [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 1] p. 194, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The wonderful success which attended the preaching of the gospel by the apostles and their fellow laborers increased the hatred of the unbelieving Jews. They made every effort to hinder its progress, and finally succeeded in enlisting the power of the Roman emperor against the Christians. A great persecution followed, in which many of the followers of Christ were put to death. The apostle John was now an aged man; but with great zeal and success he continued to preach the doctrine of Christ. He had a testimony of power, which his adversaries could not controvert, and which greatly encouraged his brethren. [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 2] p. 194, Para. 3, [1881MS].

When the faith of the Christians would seem to waver under the fierce opposition they were forced to meet, the apostle would repeat, with great dignity, power, and eloquence, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; . . . that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 3] p. 194, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The bitterest hatred was kindled against John for his unwavering fidelity to the cause of Christ. He was the last survivor of the disciples who were intimately connected with Jesus; and his enemies

decided that his testimony must be silenced. If this could be accomplished, they thought the doctrine of Christ would not spread; and if treated with severity, it might soon die out of the world. John was accordingly summoned to Rome to be tried for his faith. His doctrines were misstated. False witnesses accused him as a seditious person, publicly teaching theories which would subvert the nation. [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 4] p. 194, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The apostle presented his faith in a clear and convincing manner, with such simplicity and candor that his words had a powerful effect. His hearers were astonished at his wisdom and eloquence. But the more convincing his testimony, the deeper the hatred of those who opposed the truth. The emperor was filled with rage, and blasphemed the name of God and of Christ. He could not controvert the apostle's reasoning, or match the power which attended the utterance of truth, and he determined to silence its faithful advocate. [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 5] p. 194, Para. 6, [1881MS].

Here we see how hard the heart may become when obstinately set against the purposes of God. The foes of the church were determined to maintain their pride and power before the people. By the emperor's decree, John was banished to the Isle of Patmos, condemned, as he tells us, "for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." But the enemies of Christ utterly fail in their purpose to silence his faithful witness. From the Isle of Patmos, comes the apostle's voice, reaching even to the end of time, and revealing the most thrilling truths ever presented to mortals. [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 6] p. 195, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Patmos, a barren, rocky island in the Aegean Sea, had been chosen by the Roman government as a place of banishment for criminals. But this gloomy abode proved, to the servant of God, to be the gate of Heaven. He was shut away from the busy scenes of life, and from his active labors as an evangelist; but he was not excluded from the presence of God. In his desolate home he could commune with the King of kings, and study more closely the manifestations of divine power in the book of nature and the pages of inspiration. He delighted to meditate upon the great work of creation, and to adore the power of the Divine Architect. In former years his eyes had been greeted with the sight of wood covered hills, green valleys, and fruitful plains; and in all the beauties of nature he had delighted to trace the wisdom and skill of the Creator. He was now surrounded with scenes that to many would appear gloomy and uninteresting. But to John it was otherwise. He could read the most important lessons in the wild, desolate rocks, the mysteries of the great deep, and the glories of the firmament. To him, all bore the impress of God's power, and declared his glory. [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 7] p. 195, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The apostle beheld around him the witnesses of the flood, which deluged the earth because the inhabitants ventured to transgress the law of God. The rocks, thrown up from the great deep and from the earth, by the breaking forth of the waters, brought vividly to his mind the terrors of that awful outpouring of God's wrath. [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 8] p. 195, Para. 3, [1881MS].

But while all that surrounded him below appeared desolate and barren, the blue heavens that bent above the apostle on lonely Patmos were as bright and beautiful as the skies above his own loved Jerusalem. Let

man once look upon the glory of the heavens in the night season, and mark the work of God's power in the hosts thereof, and he is taught a lesson of his own littleness. If he has cherished pride and self-importance because of talents or personal accomplishments, because he is rich in houses and lands, let him go out in the beautiful night, and look upon the starry heavens, and learn to humble his proud spirit in the presence of the Infinite One. [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 9] p. 195, Para. 4, [1881MS].

In the voice of many waters,--deep calling unto deep,--the prophet heard the voice of the Creator. The sea, lashed to fury by the merciless winds, represented to him the wrath of an offended God. The mighty waves, in their most terrible commotion restrained within the limits appointed by an invisible hand, spoke to John of an infinite power controlling the deep. And in contrast he saw and felt the folly of feeble mortals, but worms of the dust, who glory in their wisdom and strength, and set their hearts against the Ruler of the universe, as though God were altogether such an one as themselves. How blind and senseless is human pride! One hour of God's blessing in the sunshine and rain upon the earth, will do more to change the face of nature than man, with all his boasted knowledge and persevering efforts, can accomplish during a lifetime. [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 10] p. 196, Para. 1, [1881MS].

In the surroundings of his island home, the exiled prophet read the manifestations of divine power, and in all the works of nature held communion with his God. The most ardent longing of the soul after God, the most fervent prayers, went up to Heaven from rocky Patmos. As John looked upon the rocks, he was reminded of Christ, the rock of his strength, in whose shelter he could hide without a fear. [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 11] p. 196, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The Lord's day mentioned by John was the Sabbath,--the day on which Jehovah rested after the great work of creation, and which he blessed and sanctified because he had rested upon it. The Sabbath was as sacredly observed by John upon the Isle of Patmos as when he was among the people, preaching upon that day. By the barren rocks surrounding him, John was reminded of rocky Horeb, and how, when God spoke his law to the people there, he said, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 12] p. 196, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The Father and the Son spoke to Moses from the rocks. God made the rocks his sanctuary. His temple was the everlasting hills. The Divine Legislator descended upon the rocky mountain to speak his law in the hearing of all the people, that they might be impressed by the grand and awful exhibition of his power and glory, and fear to transgress his commandments. God spoke his law amid thunders and lightnings and the thick cloud upon the top of the mountain, and his voice was as the voice of a trumpet exceeding loud. The law of Jehovah was unchangeable, and the tablets upon which he wrote that law were solid rock, signifying the immutability of its precepts. Rocky Horeb became a sacred place to all who loved and revered the law of God. [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 13] p. 196, Para. 4, [1881MS].

While John was contemplating the scenes of Horeb, the Spirit of God, who sanctified the seventh day, came upon him. He contemplated the sin of Adam in transgressing the divine law, and the fearful result of that

transgression. The infinite love of God, in giving his Son to redeem a lost race, seemed too great for language to express. As he presents it in his epistle, he calls upon the church and the world to behold it. "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." It was a mystery to John that God could give his Son to die for rebellious man. And he was lost in amazement that the plan of salvation, devised at such a cost to Heaven, should be refused by those for whom the infinite sacrifice had been made. [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 14] p. 196, Para. 5, [1881MS].

John was shut in with God. As he learned more of the divine character, through the works of creation, his reverence for God increased. He often asked himself, Why do not men, who are wholly dependent upon God, seek to be at peace with him by willing obedience? He is infinite in wisdom, and there is no limit to his power. He controls the heavens with their numberless worlds. He preserves in perfect harmony the grandeur and beauty of the things which he has created. Sin is the transgression of God's law; and the penalty of sin is death. There would have been no discord in Heaven or in the earth, if sin had never entered. Disobedience to God's law has brought all the misery that has existed among his creatures. Why will not men be reconciled to God? [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 15] p. 197, Para. 1, [1881MS].

It is no light matter to sin against God,--to set the perverse will of man in opposition to the divine will. It is for the best interest of man, even in this world, to obey God's commandments. And it is surely for his eternal interest to submit to God, and be at peace with him. The beasts of the field obey their Creator's law in the instinct which governs them. He speaks to the proud ocean, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further;" and the waters are prompt to obey his word. The planets are marshaled in perfect order, obeying the laws which God has established. He has given to man reasoning powers to understand the claims of the divine law, and a conscience to feel the guilt of transgression and the peace and joy of obedience. And yet, of all the creatures that God has made upon the earth, man alone is rebellious. God has left man as a free moral agent, to obey or disobey. The reward of everlasting life,--an eternal weight of glory,--is promised to those who do God's will, while the threatenings of his wrath hang over all who defy his law. [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 16] p. 197, Para. 2, [1881MS].

As John meditated upon the glory of God displayed in his works, he was overwhelmed with the greatness and majesty of the Creator. Should all the inhabitants of this little world refuse obedience to God, he would not be left without glory. He could sweep every mortal from the face of the earth in a moment, and create a new race to people it and glorify his name. God is not dependent on man for honor. He could marshal the starry hosts of heaven, the millions of worlds above, to raise a song of honor and praise and glory to his name. "And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord; thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints. For who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him." [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 17] p. 197, Para. 3, [1881MS].

John calls to remembrance the wonderful incidents that he has witnessed in the life of Christ. In imagination he again enjoys the precious opportunities with which he had once been favored, and is greatly comforted. Suddenly his meditation is broken in upon; he is addressed in tones distinct and clear. He turns to see from whence the voice proceeds, and lo! he beholds his Lord, whom he had loved, with whom he had walked and talked, and whose sufferings upon the cross he had witnessed. But how changed is the Saviour's appearance! He is no longer "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." He bears no marks of his humiliation. His eyes are like a flame of fire; his feet like fine brass, as it glows in a furnace. The tones of his voice are like the musical sound of many waters. His countenance shines like the sun in its meridian glory. In his hand are seven stars, signifying the ministers of the churches. Out of his mouth issues a sharp, two-edged sword, representing the power of his word. [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 18] p. 198, Para. 1, [1881MS].

John, who had so loved his Lord, and who had steadfastly adhered to the truth in the face of imprisonment, stripes, and threatened death, cannot endure the excellent glory of Christ's majesty, but falls to the earth as one stricken dead. Jesus then lays his hand upon the prostrate form of his servant, saying, "Fear not. I am He that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore." John was strengthened to live in the presence of his glorified Lord; and then were presented before him in holy vision the purposes of God for future ages. The glorious attractions of the heavenly home were made known to him. He was permitted to look upon the throne of God, and to behold the white-robed throng of redeemed ones. He heard the music of heavenly angels, and the songs of triumph from those who had overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 19] p. 198, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The humility of John did not consist in a mere profession; it was a grace that clothed him as naturally as a garment. He ever sought to conceal his own righteous acts, and to avoid everything that would seem to attract attention to himself. In his Gospel, John mentions the disciple whom Jesus loved, but conceals the fact that the one thus honored was himself. His course was devoid of selfishness. In his daily life he taught and practiced charity in the fullest sense. He had a high sense of the love that should exist among natural brothers and Christian brethren. He presents and urges this love as an essential characteristic of the followers of Jesus. Destitute of this, all pretensions to the Christian name are vain. [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 20] p. 198, Para. 3, [1881MS].

John was a teacher of practical holiness. He presents unerring rules for the conduct of Christians. They must be pure in heart, and correct in manners. In no case should they be satisfied with an empty profession. He declares in unmistakable terms that to be a Christian is to be Christlike. [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 21] p. 198, Para. 4, [1881MS].

John does not once claim to be sinless. But his life was one of earnest effort to conform to the will of God. It was a living representation of Christian sanctification. He followed his Saviour closely, and had such a sense of the purity and exalted holiness of Christ, that his own character appeared, in contrast, exceedingly

defective. And when Jesus in his glorified body appeared to John, one glimpse was enough to cause him to fall down as one dead. Such will ever be the feelings of those who know best their Lord and Master. The more closely they contemplate the life and character of Jesus, the less will they be disposed to claim holiness of heart, or to boast of their sanctification. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 03-01-81 para. 22] p. 199, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Text: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. 5: 23. [Cf: RH 03-08-81 para. 1] p. 199, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Sanctification is obtained only in obedience to the will of God. Many who are willfully trampling upon the law of Jehovah, claim holiness of heart and sanctification of life. But they have not a saving knowledge of God or of his law. They are standing in the ranks of the great rebel. He is at war with the law of God, which is the foundation of the divine government in Heaven and in the earth. These men are doing the same work as their master has done in seeking to make of none effect God's holy law. No commandment breaker can be permitted to enter Heaven; for he who was once a pure and exalted covering cherub, was thrust out for rebelling against the government of God. [Cf: RH 03-08-81 para. 2] p. 199, Para. 3, [1881MS].

With many, sanctification is only self-righteousness. And yet these persons boldly claim Jesus as their Saviour and sanctifier. What a delusion! Will the Son of God sanctify the transgressor of the Father's law,--that law which Christ came to exalt and make honorable? He testifies, "I have kept my Father's commandments." God will not bring his law down to meet the imperfect standard of man; and man cannot meet the demands of that holy law without exercising repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. [Cf: RH 03-08-81 para. 3] p. 199, Para. 4, [1881MS].

"If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." But God has not given his Son to a life of suffering and ignominy and a shameful death to release man from obedience to the divine law. So great is the deceptive power of Satan, that many have been led to regard the atonement of Christ as of no real value. Christ died because there was no other hope for the transgressor. He might try to keep God's law in the future; but the debt which he had incurred in the past remained, and the law must condemn him to death. Christ came to pay that debt for the sinner which it was impossible for him to pay for himself. Thus, through the atoning sacrifice of Christ, sinful man was granted another trial. [Cf: RH 03-08-81 para. 4] p. 199, Para. 5, [1881MS].

It is the sophistry of Satan that the death of Christ brought in grace to take the place of the law. The death of Jesus did not change, or annul, or lessen in the slightest degree, the law of ten commandments. That precious grace offered to men through a Saviour's blood, establishes the law of God. Since the fall of man, God's moral government and his grace are inseparable. They go hand in hand through all dispensations. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." [Cf: RH 03-08-81 para. 5] p. 200, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Jesus, our substitute, consented to bear for man the penalty of the law transgressed. He clothed his divinity with humanity, and thus became the Son of man, a Saviour and Redeemer. The very fact of the death of God's dear Son to redeem man, shows the immutability of the divine law. How easily, from the transgressor's standpoint, could God have abolished his law, thus providing a way whereby men could be saved, and Christ remain in Heaven! The doctrine which teaches freedom, through grace, to break the law, is a fatal delusion. Every transgressor of God's law is a sinner, and none can be sanctified while living in known sin. [Cf: RH 03-08-81 para. 6] p. 200, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The condescension and agony of God's dear Son were not endured to purchase for man liberty to transgress the Father's law and yet sit down with Christ in his throne. It was that through his merits, and the exercise of repentance and faith, the most guilty sinner might receive pardon, and obtain strength to live a life of obedience. The sinner is not saved in his sins, but from his sins. [Cf: RH 03-08-81 para. 7] p. 200, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The soul must first be convicted of sin, before the sinner will feel a desire to come to Christ. "Sin is the transgression of the law." "I had not known sin but by the law." When the commandment came home to Saul's conscience, sin revived, and he died. He saw himself condemned by the law of God. The sinner cannot be convinced of his guilt, unless he understands what constitutes sin. It is impossible for an individual to experience Bible sanctification while he holds that if he believes in Christ it is immaterial whether he obeys God's law or disobeys it. [Cf: RH 03-08-81 para. 8] p. 200, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Those who profess to keep the law of God, and yet at heart are indulging in sin, are condemned by the True Witness. They claim to be rich in a knowledge of the truth; but they are not in harmony with its sacred principles. The truth does not sanctify their lives. God's word declares that the professed commandment keeper whose life contradicts his faith, is blind, wretched, poor, and naked. [Cf: RH 03-08-81 para. 9] p. 200, Para. 5, [1881MS].

God's law is the mirror presenting a complete reflection of the man as he is, and holding up before him the correct likeness. Some will turn away and forget this picture, while others will employ abusive epithets against the law, as though this would cure their defects of character. Still others who are condemned by the law will repent of their transgressions, and, through faith in Christ's merits, will perfect Christian character. [Cf: RH 03-08-81 para. 10] p. 200, Para. 6, [1881MS].

The whole world is guilty in God's sight of transgressing his law. Because the great majority will continue to transgress, and thus remain at enmity with God, is no reason why none should confess themselves guilty and become obedient. To a superficial observer, persons who are naturally amiable, who are educated and refined, may appear perfect in life. "Man looketh on the outward appearance; but the Lord looketh on the heart." Unless the lifegiving truths of God's word, when presented to the conscience, are understandingly received, and then faithfully carried out in the life, no man can see the kingdom of Heaven. To some,

these truths have a charm because of their novelty, but are not accepted as the word of God. Those who do not receive the light when it is brought before them, will be condemned by it. [Cf: RH 03-08-81 para. 11] p. 201, Para. 1, [1881MS].

In every congregation in the land there are souls unsatisfied, hungering and thirsting for salvation. By day and by night, the burden of their hearts is, What shall I do to be saved? They listen eagerly to popular discourses, hoping to learn how they may be justified before God. But too often they hear only a pleasing speech, an eloquent declamation. There are sad and disappointed hearts in every religious gathering. The minister tells his hearers that they cannot keep the law of God. "It is not binding upon man in our day," he says. "You must believe in Christ; he will save you; only believe." Thus he teaches them to make feeling their criterion, and gives them no intelligent faith. That minister may profess to be very sincere; but he is seeking to quiet the troubled conscience with a false hope. [Cf: RH 03-08-81 para. 12] p. 201, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Many are led to think that they are on the road to Heaven, because they profess to believe in Christ, while they reject the law of God. But they will find at last that they were on the way to perdition, instead of Heaven. Spiritual poison is sugarcoated with the doctrine of sanctification, and administered to the people. Thousands eagerly swallow it, feeling that if they are only honest in their belief they will be safe. But sincerity will not convert error to truth. A man may swallow poison, thinking it is food; but his sincerity will not save him from the effects of the dose. [Cf: RH 03-08-81 para. 13] p. 201, Para. 3, [1881MS].

God has given us his word to be our guide. Christ has said, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." He prayed for his disciples, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." Paul says, "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." But this belief did not make his course right. When Paul received the gospel of Jesus Christ, it made him a new creature. He was transformed; the truth was planted in his soul, and gave him such faith and courage as a follower of Christ that no opposition could move him, no suffering daunt him. Men may make what excuse they please for their rejection of God's law; but no excuse will be accepted in the day of Judgment. Those who are contending with God, and strengthening their guilty souls in transgression, must very soon meet the great Lawgiver over his broken law. [Cf: RH 03-08-81 para. 14] p. 201, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The day of God's vengeance cometh,--the day of the fierceness of his wrath. Who will abide the day of his coming? Men have hardened their hearts against the Spirit of God; but the arrows of his wrath will pierce where the arrows of conviction could not. God will not far hence arise to deal with the sinner. Will the false shepherd shield the transgressor in that day? Can he be excused who went with the multitude in the path of disobedience? Will popularity or numbers make any guiltless? These are questions which the careless and indifferent should consider and settle for themselves. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 03-08-81 para. 15] p. 202, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Text: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. 5:23. [Cf: RH 04-26-81 para. 1] p. 202, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The character of the Christian is shown by his daily life. Said Christ, "Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit." Our Saviour compares himself to a vine, of which his followers are the branches. He plainly declares that all who would be his disciples must bring forth fruit; and then he shows how they may become fruitful branches. "Abide in me, and I in you; as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me." [Cf: RH 04-26-81 para. 2] p. 202, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The apostle Paul describes the fruit which the Christian is to bear. He says that it "is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." And again, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." These precious graces are but the principles of God's law carried out in the life. [Cf: RH 04-26-81 para. 3] p. 202, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Those who have genuine love for God will manifest an earnest desire to know his will and to do it. Says the apostle John, whose epistles treat so fully upon love, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." The child who loves his parents will show that love by willing obedience; but the selfish, ungrateful child seeks to do as little as possible for his parents, while he at the same time desires to enjoy all the privileges granted to the obedient and faithful. The same difference is seen among those who profess to be children of God. Many who know that they are the objects of his love and care, and who desire to receive his blessing, take no delight in doing his will. They regard God's claims upon them as an unpleasant restraint, his commandments as a grievous yoke. But he who is earnestly seeking for holiness of heart and life, delights in the law of God, and mourns only that he falls so far short of meeting its requirements. [Cf: RH 04-26-81 para. 4] p. 202, Para. 5, [1881MS].

We are commanded to love one another as Christ has loved us. He has manifested his love by laying down his life to redeem us. The beloved disciple says that we should be willing to lay down our lives for the brethren. For "every one that loveth Him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of Him." If we love Christ, we shall love those who resemble him in life and character. And not only so, but we shall love those who "have no hope and are without God in the world." It was to save sinners that Christ left his home in Heaven, and came to earth to suffer and to die. For this he toiled and agonized and prayed, until, heartbroken and deserted by those he came to save, he poured out his life on Calvary. [Cf: RH 04-26-81 para. 5] p. 203, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Many shrink from such a life as our Saviour lived. They feel that it requires too great a sacrifice to imitate the Pattern, to bring forth fruit in good works, and then patiently endure the pruning of God that they may bring forth more fruit. But when the Christian regards himself as only a humble instrument in the hands of Christ, and endeavors to faithfully perform every duty, relying upon the help which God has promised, then he will wear the yoke of Christ and find it easy; then

he will bear burdens for Christ, and pronounce them light. He can look up with courage and with confidence, and say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him." [Cf: RH 04-26-81 para. 6] p. 203, Para. 2, [1881MS].

If we meet obstacles in our path and faithfully overcome them, if we encounter opposition and reproach, and in Christ's name gain the victory, if we bear responsibilities and discharge our duties in the spirit of our Master, then, indeed, we gain a precious knowledge of his faithfulness and power. We no longer depend upon the experience of others, for we have the witness in ourselves. Like the Samaritans of old, we can say, "We have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." [Cf: RH 04-26-81 para. 7] p. 203, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The more we contemplate the character of Christ, and the more we experience of his saving power, the more keenly shall we realize our own weakness and imperfection, and the more earnestly shall we look to him as our strength and our Redeemer. We have no power in ourselves to cleanse the soul temple from its defilement; but as we repent of our sins against God, and seek pardon through the merits of Christ, he will impart that faith that works by love and purifies the heart. By faith in Christ, and obedience to the law of God, we may be sanctified, and thus obtain a fitness for the society of holy angels and the white-robed redeemed ones in the kingdom of glory. [Cf: RH 04-26-81 para. 8] p. 203, Para. 4, [1881MS].

It is not only the privilege but the duty of every Christian to maintain a close union with Christ, and to have a rich experience in the things of God. Then his life will be fruitful in good works. Said Christ, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." In his letter to the church at Ephesus, Paul endeavors to set before his brethren the "mystery of the gospel," the "unsearchable riches of Christ," and then assures them of his earnest prayers for their spiritual prosperity:-- [Cf: RH 04-26-81 para. 9] p. 203, Para. 5, [1881MS].

"I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 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 with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." [Cf: RH 04-26-81 para. 10] p. 204, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Again, he writes to his Corinthian brethren, "to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus," "Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; that in everything ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you; so that ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." These words are addressed not only to the church at Corinth, but to all the people of God to the close of time. Every Christian may enjoy the blessing of sanctification. [Cf: RH 04-26-81

para. 11] p. 204, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The apostle continues, in these words: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment." Paul would not have appealed to them to do that which was impossible. Unity is the sure result of Christian perfection. [Cf: RH 04-26-81 para. 12] p. 204, Para. 3, [1881MS].

In the epistle to the Colossians also are set forth the glorious privileges vouchsafed to the children of God. "Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints, . . . we also since the day we heard it do not cease to pray for you; and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness." [Cf: RH 04-26-81 para. 13] p. 204, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The apostle himself was endeavoring to reach the same standard of holiness which he set before his brethren. He writes to the Philippians: "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. . . . That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." There is a striking contrast between the boastful, self-righteous claims of those who profess to be without sin, and the modest language of the apostle. Yet it was the purity and faithfulness of his own life that gave such power to his exhortations to his brethren. [Cf: RH 04-26-81 para. 14] p. 204, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Paul did not hesitate to enforce, upon every suitable occasion, the importance of Bible sanctification. He says: "Ye know what commandment we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, 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. Do all things without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world." [Cf: RH 04-26-81 para. 15] p. 205, Para. 1, [1881MS].

He bids Titus to instruct the church that while they should trust to the merits of Christ for salvation, divine grace, dwelling in their hearts, will lead to the faithful performance of all the duties of

life. "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men. For we ourselves also were sometime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men." [Cf: RH 04-26-81 para. 16] p. 205, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Paul seeks to impress upon our minds the fact that the foundation of all acceptable service to God, as well as the very crown of the Christian graces, is love; and that only in the soul where love reigns will the peace of God abide. "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 04-26-81 para. 17] p. 205, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Text: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. 5:23. [Cf: RH 05-03-81 para. 1] p. 206, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Many who are sincerely seeking for holiness of heart and purity of life seem perplexed and discouraged. They are constantly looking to themselves, and lamenting their lack of faith; and because they have no faith, they feel that they cannot claim the blessing of God. These persons mistake faith for feeling. They look above the simplicity of true faith, and thus bring great darkness upon their souls. They should turn the mind from self, to dwell upon the mercy and goodness of God and to recount his promises, and then simply believe that he will fulfill his word. We are not to trust in our faith, but in the promises of God. When we repent of our past transgressions of his law, and resolve to render obedience in the future, we should believe that God for Christ's sake accepts us, and forgives our sins. [Cf: RH 05-03-81 para. 2] p. 206, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Darkness and discouragement will sometimes come upon the soul, and threaten to overwhelm us; but we should not cast away our confidence. We must keep the eye fixed on Jesus, feeling or no feeling. We should seek to faithfully perform every known duty, and then calmly rest in the promises of God. [Cf: RH 05-03-81 para. 3] p. 206, Para. 3,

[1881MS].

At times a deep sense of our unworthiness will send a thrill of terror through the soul; but this is no evidence that God has changed toward us, or we toward God. No effort should be made to rein the mind up to a certain intensity of emotion. We may not feel today the peace and joy which we felt yesterday; but we should by faith grasp the hand of Christ, and trust him as fully in the darkness as in the light. [Cf: RH 05-03-81 para. 4] p. 206, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Satan may whisper, "You are too great a sinner for Christ to save." While you acknowledge that you are indeed sinful and unworthy, you may meet the tempter with the cry, "By virtue of the atonement, I claim Christ as my Saviour. I trust not to my own merits, but to the precious blood of Jesus, which cleanses me. This moment I hang my helpless soul on Christ." The Christian life must be a life of constant, living faith. An unyielding trust, a firm reliance upon Christ, will bring peace and assurance to the soul. [Cf: RH 05-03-81 para. 5] p. 206, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Be not discouraged because your heart seems hard. Every obstacle, every internal foe, only increases your need of Christ. He came to take away the heart of stone, and give you a heart of flesh. Look to him for special grace to overcome your peculiar faults. When assailed by temptation, steadfastly resist the evil promptings; say to your soul, "How can I dishonor my Redeemer? I have given myself to Christ; I cannot do the works of Satan." Cry to the dear Saviour for help to sacrifice every idol, and to put away every darling sin. Let the eye of faith see Jesus standing before the Father's throne, presenting his wounded hands as he pleads for you. Believe that strength comes to you through your precious Saviour. [Cf: RH 05-03-81 para. 6] p. 206, Para. 6, [1881MS].

By faith look upon the crowns laid up for those who shall overcome; listen to the exultant song of the redeemed, Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain and hast redeemed us to God! Endeavor to make these scenes a reality. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, in his terrible conflict with principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places, exclaimed, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." The Saviour of the world was revealed to him as looking down from Heaven upon him with the deepest interest; and the glorious light of Christ's countenance shone upon Stephen with such brightness that even his enemies saw his face shine like the face of an angel. [Cf: RH 05-03-81 para. 7] p. 207, Para. 1, [1881MS].

If we would permit our minds to dwell more upon Christ and the heavenly world, we should find a powerful stimulus and support in fighting the battles of the Lord. Pride and love of the world will lose their power as we contemplate the glories of that better land so soon to be our home. Beside the loveliness of Christ, all earthly attractions will seem of little worth. [Cf: RH 05-03-81 para. 8] p. 207, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Let none imagine that without earnest effort on their part they can obtain the assurance of God's love. When the mind has been long permitted to dwell only on earthly things, it is a difficult matter to

change the habits of thought. That which the eye sees and the ear hears, too often attracts the attention and absorbs the interest. But if we would ever enter the city of God, and look upon Jesus in his glory, we must become accustomed to beholding him with the eye of faith here. The words and the character of Christ should be often the subject of our thoughts and of our conversation; and each day some time should be especially devoted to prayerful meditation upon these sacred themes. [Cf: RH 05-03-81 para. 9] p. 207, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Sanctification is a daily work. Let none deceive themselves with the belief that God will pardon and bless them while they are trampling upon one of his requirements. The willful commission of one known sin silences the witnessing voice of the Spirit, and separates the soul from God. Whatever may be the ecstasies of religious feeling, Jesus cannot abide in the heart that disregards the divine law. God will honor those only who honor him. [Cf: RH 05-03-81 para. 10] p. 207, Para. 4, [1881MS].

"His servants ye are to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey." If we indulge anger, lust, covetousness, hatred, selfishness, or any other sin, we become servants of sin. "No man can serve two masters." If we serve sin, we cannot serve Christ. The Christian will feel the promptings of sin, for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit; but the Spirit striveth against the flesh, keeping up a constant warfare. Here is where Christ's help is needed. Human weakness becomes united to divine strength, and faith exclaims, "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!" [Cf: RH 05-03-81 para. 11] p. 208, Para. 1, [1881MS].

If we would develop a character which God can accept, we must form correct habits in our religious life. Daily prayer is as essential to growth in grace, and even to spiritual life itself, as is temporal food to physical well-being. We should accustom ourselves to often lift the thoughts to God in prayer. If the mind wanders, we must bring it back; by persevering effort, habit will finally make it easy. We cannot for one moment separate ourselves from Christ with safety. We may have his presence to attend us at every step, but only by observing the conditions which he has himself laid down. [Cf: RH 05-03-81 para. 12] p. 208, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Religion must be made the great business of life. Everything else should be held subordinate to this. All our powers of soul, body, and spirit, must be engaged in the Christian warfare. We must look to Christ for strength and grace, and we shall gain the victory as surely as Jesus died for us. [Cf: RH 05-03-81 para. 13] p. 208, Para. 3, [1881MS].

We must come nearer to the cross of Christ, Penitence at the foot of the cross is the first lesson of peace we have to learn. The love of Jesus--who can comprehend it? Infinitely more tender and self-denying than a mother's love! If we would know the value of a human soul, we must look in living faith upon the cross, and thus begin the study which shall be the science and the song of the redeemed through all eternity. The value of our time and our talents can be estimated only by the greatness of the ransom paid for our redemption. What ingratitude do we manifest toward God when we rob him of his own by withholding from him our affections and our service. Is it too much to

give ourselves to Him who has sacrificed all for us? Can we choose the friendship of the world before the immortal honors which Christ proffers,--"to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father on his throne"? [Cf: RH 05-03-81 para. 14] p. 208, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Sanctification is a progressive work. The successive steps are set before us in the words of Peter: "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity;" "for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." [Cf: RH 05-03-81 para. 15] p. 208, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Here is a course by which we may be assured that we shall never fall. Those who are thus working upon the plan of addition in obtaining the Christian graces, have the assurance that God will work upon the plan of multiplication in granting them the gifts of his Spirit. Peter addresses those who have obtained like precious faith with us: "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord." By divine grace, all who will may climb the shining steps from earth to Heaven, and at last, "with songs and everlasting joy," enter through the gates into the city of God. [Cf: RH 05-03-81 para. 16] p. 209, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Our Saviour claims all there is of us; he asks our first and holiest thoughts, our purest and most intense affection. If we are indeed partakers of the divine nature, his praise will be continually in our hearts and upon our lips. Our only safety is to surrender our all to him, and to be constantly growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. [Cf: RH 05-03-81 para. 17] p. 209, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The apostle Paul was highly honored of God, being taken in holy vision to the third heaven, where he looked upon scenes whose glories might not be revealed to mortals. Yet all this did not lead him to boastfulness or self-confidence. He realized the importance of constant watchfulness and self-denial, and plainly declares, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." [Cf: RH 05-03-81 para. 18] p. 209, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Paul suffered for the truth's sake, and yet we hear no complaints from his lips. As he reviews his life of toil and care and sacrifice he says, "I reckon the sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." The shout of victory from God's faithful servant comes down the line to our time,-- "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." [Cf: RH 05-03-81 para. 19] p. 209, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Though Paul was at last confined in a Roman prison,--shut away from the light and air of heaven, cut off from his active labors in the gospel, and momentarily expecting to be condemned to death,--yet he did not yield to doubt or despondency. From that gloomy dungeon came his dying testimony, full of a sublime faith and courage that has inspired the hearts of saints and martyrs in all succeeding ages. His words fitly describe the result of that sanctification which we have in these articles endeavored to set forth. "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 05-03-81 para. 20] p. 209, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Jesus invites the weary to come to him for rest: "Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matt. 11:28-30. [Cf: RH 08-02-81 para. 1] p. 210, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Many who hear this invitation sigh for rest, and yet press on the rugged path, hugging their burdens closer to their heart. Jesus loves them, and longs to bear their burdens and themselves also in his strong arms of love. He invites them to lay the heavy burdens on him. Your fears and uncertainties, that rob you of peace and rest, he would remove; but you must come to him, and tell him the secret woes of your heart. He invites your confidence as the proof of your love for him. Jesus would rather have the gift of the humble, trusting heart than all the wealth riches can bestow. He invites through his messengers the gift of yourselves. Only come to him in the simplicity and confidence with which a child would come to its parents, and the divine touch from his hand will relieve you of your burdens. [Cf: RH 08-02-81 para. 2] p. 210, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Let us not forget that Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. The compassionate Saviour invites all to come to him. Let us believe the words of our Lord, and not make the way to him so hard. Let us not travel the precious road, cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in, with murmuring, with doubts, with cloudy forebodings, groaning, as if forced to an unpleasant, exacting task. The ways of Christ are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace. If we have made rough paths for our feet, and taken upon us heavy burdens of care in laying up for ourselves treasures upon the earth, let us now change, and follow the path Jesus has prepared for us. [Cf: RH 08-02-81 para. 3] p. 210, Para. 3, [1881MS].

We are not always willing to give our burdens to Jesus. We sometimes pour our troubles into human ears, and tell our afflictions to those who cannot help us, and neglect to confide all to Jesus, that he may change the sorrowful ways to paths of joy and peace. Self-denying, self-sacrificing love gives glory and victory to the cross. The promises of God's word are very precious. We must study his word, if we would know his will. The words of inspiration, carefully studied and practically obeyed, will lead our feet in a plain path, where we may walk without stumbling. Oh, that ministers and people would take all

the burdens and perplexities to Jesus, who is waiting to receive them and give them peace and rest. Jesus will never forsake those who put their trust in him. [Cf: RH 08-02-81 para. 4] p. 210, Para. 4, [1881MS].

We are living in an age when wickedness prevails. The perils of the last days thicken around us, and because iniquity abounds, the love of many waxes cold. This need not be if all would come to Jesus, and in confiding faith trust in him. His meekness and his lowliness, cherished, will bring peace and rest and moral power to every soul. [Cf: RH 08-02-81 para. 5] p. 210, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The shortness of time is urged as an incentive for us to seek righteousness and to make Christ our friend. This is not the great motive. It savors of selfishness. Is it necessary that the terrors of the day of God be held before us to compel us through fear to right action? This ought not to be. Jesus is attractive. He is full of love, mercy, and compassion. He proposes to be our friend, to walk with us through all the rough pathways of life. He says to you, I am the Lord thy God; walk with me, and I will fill thy path with light. Jesus, the Majesty of Heaven, proposes to elevate to companionship with himself those who come to him with their burdens, their weaknesses, and their cares. He will make them his dear children, and finally give them an inheritance of more value than the empires of kings, a crown of glory richer than has ever decked the brow of the most exalted earthly monarch. [Cf: RH 08-02-81 para. 6] p. 211, Para. 1, [1881MS].

It is our duty to love him as our Redeemer. He commands our love, and as a friend he invites our love. Christ's invitation to us all is a call to a life of peace and rest,--a life of liberty and love, and to a rich inheritance in the future immortal life. Why, then, should we resist his invitation and refuse his love? If we choose to live with Christ through the ceaseless ages of eternity, why not choose him as our best and most honored and loved companion here? Christ calls us to walk with him in this world in the path of humble, trustful obedience, which will secure a pure, holy, happy life. Which will we choose,--liberty in Christ, or bondage and tyranny in the service of Satan? It is our privilege to have a calm, close, happy walk with Jesus every day we live. [Cf: RH 08-02-81 para. 7] p. 211, Para. 2, [1881MS].

We need not be alarmed if this path of liberty is laid through conflicts and sufferings. The liberty we shall enjoy will be the more valuable because we made sacrifices to obtain it. The peace which passeth knowledge will cost us battles with the powers of darkness, struggles severe against selfishness and inward sins. The victories gained daily through persevering, untiring effort in well doing, will be precious through Christ who hath loved us, "who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." The excellence of Christ we should seek to obtain. In the face of temptation we should school ourselves to firm endurance, which will not provoke one murmuring thought, although we may be weary in toiling, and in fighting the good fight of faith. [Cf: RH 08-02-81 para. 8] p. 211, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Thank God that some have passed through afflictions with light undimmed. Their hope and faith are strong, because acquired by conflict and nurtured by suffering. If it were not for these heroes of faith,

who have learned to endure, and to suffer and be strong, the outlook would be indeed discouraging. How could any of us know how to sympathize with the sorrowing, the burdened, the afflicted, and be to them the help they need, if we had never experienced similar trials ourselves? We cannot appreciate our Redeemer in the highest sense until we can see him by the eye of faith reaching to the very depths of human wretchedness, taking upon himself the nature of man, the capacity to suffer, and by suffering putting forth his divine power to save and lift sinners up to companionship with himself. Oh, why have we so little sense of sin? Why so little penitence? It is because we do not come nearer the cross of Christ. Conscience becomes hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, because we remain away from Christ. Consider the Captain of our salvation. He suffered shame for us that we might not suffer everlasting shame and contempt. He suffered on the cross, that mercy might be granted to fallen man. God's justice is preserved, and guilty man is pardoned. Jesus dies that the sinner might live. Shame is borne by the Son of the Highest for the sake of poor sinners, that they might be ransomed and crowned with eternal glory. [Cf: RH 08-02-81 para. 9] p. 211, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The cross of Calvary appeals in power, affording a reason why we should love Christ now, and why we should consider him first, and best, and last, in everything. We should take our fitting place in humble penitence at the foot of the cross. We may learn the lessons of meekness and lowliness of mind as we go up to Mount Calvary, and, looking upon the cross, see our Saviour in agony, the Son of God dying, the just for the unjust. Behold Him who could summon legions of angels to his assistance with one word, a subject of jest and merriment, of reviling and hatred. He gives himself a sacrifice for sin. When reviled, he threatened not; when falsely accused, he opened not his mouth. He prays on the cross for his murderers. He is dying for them. He is paying an infinite price for every one of them. He would not lose one whom he has purchased at so great cost. He gives himself to be smitten, and scourged, without a murmur. And this uncomplaining victim is the Son of God. His throne is from everlasting, and his kingdom shall have no end. [Cf: RH 08-02-81 para. 10] p. 212, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Come, you who are seeking your own pleasures in forbidden joys and in sinful indulgences, you who are scattering from Christ. Look, O look upon the cross of Calvary; behold the royal victim suffering on your account, and be wise while you have opportunity, and seek now the fountain of life and true happiness. Come, you who complain and murmur at the little inconveniences and the few trials you must bear in this life. Look on Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith. He turns from his royal throne, his high command, and lays aside his royal robe, and clothes his divinity with humanity. For our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. [Cf: RH 08-02-81 para. 11] p. 212, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The Son of God was rejected and despised for our sakes. Can you, in full view of the cross, beholding by the eye of faith the sufferings of Christ, tell your tale of woe, your trials? Can you nurse revenge of your enemies in your heart while the prayer of Christ comes from his pale and quivering lips for his revilers, his murderers,--"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do?" [Cf: RH 08-02-81 para. 12] p. 212, Para. 3, [1881MS].

A work is before us to subdue pride and vanity, that seek a place in our hearts, and through penitence and faith to bring ourselves into familiar and holy converse with Jesus Christ. We must not shrink from the depths of humiliation to which the Son of God submitted in order to raise us from the degradation and bondage of sin to a seat at his right hand. We must deny self, and fight continually against pride. We must hide self in Jesus Christ, and let him appear in our conversation and character as the One altogether lovely, and the chief among ten thousand. Our lives, our deportment, will testify how highly we prize Christ, and the salvation he has wrought out for us at such a cost to himself. While we look constantly to Him whom our sins have pierced, and our sorrows have burdened, we shall acquire strength to be like him. We shall bind ourselves in willing, happy, captivity to Jesus Christ. It is high time we devoted the few remaining precious hours of our probation to washing our robes of character, and making them white in the blood of the Lamb, that we may be of that white-robed company who shall stand about the great white throne. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 08-02-81 para. 13] p. 213, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Christ says to his redeemed people, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 1] p. 213, Para. 2, [1881MS].

To be a patient toiler in that which calls for self-denying labor, is a glorious work, that Heaven smiles upon. Faithful work is more acceptable to God than the most zealous and thought to be, holiest, worship. True worship consists in working together with Christ. Prayers, exhortation, and talk are cheap fruits, which are frequently tied on, but fruits that are manifested in good works, in caring for the needy, the fatherless, and widows, are genuine fruits, and grow naturally upon a good tree. [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 2] p. 213, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Pure religion and undefiled before the Father is this: "To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." The doing principle is the fruit that Christ requires us to bear; doing deeds of benevolence, speaking kind words, and manifesting tender regard for the poor, the needy, the afflicted. When one's heart sympathizes with others burdened with discouragement and grief; when his hand clothes the naked, and the stranger is made welcome to a seat in his parlor and in his heart, then angels come very near, and an answering strain responds in Heaven. Every act, every deed of justice and mercy and benevolence, makes music in Heaven. The Father from his throne beholds and numbers the performer of them with his most precious treasures. "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, when I make up my jewels." Every merciful act to the needy, or the suffering, is as though done to Jesus. Whoever succors the poor, or

sympathizes with the afflicted and oppressed, and befriends the orphan, brings himself into a more close relationship to Jesus. [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 3] p. 213, Para. 4, [1881MS].

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." Matt. 25:41-46. [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 4] p. 214, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Jesus here identifies himself with his suffering people. I was hungry and thirsty; I was a stranger; I was naked; I was sick; I was in prison. When you were enjoying your food from your bountifully spread tables, I was famishing of hunger in the hovel or street, not far from you. When you closed your doors against me, while your well furnished rooms were unoccupied, I had not where to lay my head. Your wardrobes were filled with an abundant supply of changeable suits of apparel, upon which means had been needlessly squandered, which you might have given to the needy. I was destitute of comfortable apparel. When you were enjoying health, I was sick. Misfortune cast me into prison and bound me with fetters, bowing down my spirit, depriving me of freedom and hope, while you roamed free. What a oneness Jesus here expresses as existing between himself and his suffering disciples. He makes their case his own. He identifies himself as being, in their person, the very sufferer. Here, mark, selfish Christian, that every neglect of yours to the needy poor, the orphan, the fatherless, is a neglect to Jesus in their person. [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 5] p. 214, Para. 2, [1881MS].

But there are some persons who make high professions, whose hearts are so encased in self-love and selfishness that they cannot appreciate these things. They have all their lives thought and lived only for self. To make a worthy sacrifice to do others good, to disadvantage themselves for the purpose of benefiting others, is out of the question with them. They have not the least idea that God requires this of them. Self is their dear idol. Precious weeks, months, and years of valuable time pass into eternity, but they have no record in Heaven of kindly acts, of sacrificing for others' good, of feeding the hungry, of clothing the naked, or taking in the stranger. Entertaining strangers at a venture is not agreeable; if they knew that all who shared their bounty were worthy, then they might be induced to do something in that direction. But there is virtue in venturing something. Perchance we may entertain angels. [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 6] p. 214, Para. 3, [1881MS].

There are orphans that can be cared for; but many will not venture to undertake such a work; for it involves more labor than they care to do, leaving them but little time to please themselves. But when the King shall make investigation, these do-nothing, illiberal, selfish souls will then learn that Heaven is for those who have been workers; those who have denied themselves for Christ's sake. No provisions have been made for those who have ever taken such special care in loving and

looking out for themselves. The terrible punishment the King threatened those on his left hand, in this case, is not because of their great crimes. They are not condemned for the things which they did do, but for that which they did not do. They did not those things Heaven assigned them to do. They pleased themselves, and can take their portion with self-pleasers. [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 7] p. 215, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Has the injunction of the apostle no force in this age: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares"? Our Heavenly Father lays blessings disguised in our pathway, which some will not touch for fear they will detract from their enjoyment. Angels are waiting to see if we embrace opportunities within our reach of doing good--waiting to see if we will bless others, that they in their turn may bless us. The Lord himself has made our circumstances to differ, keeping some poor, and allowing others to become rich, that all may have an opportunity to develop character. [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 8] p. 215, Para. 2, [1881MS].

When Elijah came to the widow of Sarepta, she shared her morsel with the prophet of God, and he therefore wrought a miracle, so that in the act of making a home for God's servant, and sharing her morsel with him, she was herself sustained, and her life and that of her son preserved. Thus will it prove in the case of many, if they do this cheerfully for the glory of God. Others plead their poor health; they would love to do if they had strength. Such have so long shut themselves up to themselves, and thought so much of their own poor feelings, and talked so much of their sufferings, trials, and afflictions, that it is their present truth. They cannot think of anyone else, however much they may be in need of sympathy and assistance. You who are suffering from poor health, there is a remedy for you. If you clothe the naked, and bring the poor that are cast out to your house, and deal your bread to the hungry, then shall your light break forth as the morning, and your health shall spring forth speedily. [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 9] p. 215, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Doing good is an excellent remedy for disease. Such are invited to bring their prayers to God, and he has pledged himself to answer them. "His soul shall be satisfied in drought, and he shall be like a watered garden, whose waters fail not." Wake up, brethren and sisters. Don't be afraid of good works. "Be not weary in well doing, for in due time ye shall reap if ye faint not." Do not wait to be told your duty. Open your eyes, and see who is around you, and make yourselves acquainted with the helpless, afflicted, and needy. Hide not yourselves from them; close not your eyes to their needs. Who gives the proofs mentioned in James of possessing pure religion, untainted with any selfishness or corruption? Who is anxious to do all in his power to aid in the great plan of salvation? [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 10] p. 216, Para. 1, [1881MS].

As you regard your eternal interest, arouse yourselves, and begin to sow good seed. That which ye sow shall ye also reap. The harvest is coming,--the great reaping time, when you shall reap what you have sown. There will be no failure in the crop. The harvest is sure. Now is the sowing time. Now make efforts to be rich in good works, "ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for yourselves a good foundation against the time to come, that ye may lay hold on

eternal life." I implore you, my brethren, in every church, rid yourselves of your icy coldness. Encourage in yourselves a love of hospitality, a love to help those who need help. [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 11] p. 216, Para. 2, [1881MS].

You may say that you have been disappointed by bestowing means upon those unworthy of your charity, and therefore have become discouraged in trying to help the needy. I present Jesus before you. He came to save fallen man. He came to bring salvation to his own nation; but they would not accept him. They treated his mercy with insult and contempt, and at length they put to death Him who came for the purpose of giving life to them. Did our Lord turn from all the fallen race because of this? If your efforts for good have been unsuccessful ninety-nine times, and you have received only insult, reproach, and hate; if the one-hundredth time proves a success, and one soul is saved, oh, what a victory is achieved! One soul wrenched from Satan's grasp, one soul benefited, one soul encouraged! This will a thousand times pay you for all your efforts. To you will Jesus say "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Should we not gladly do all we can to imitate the life of our divine Lord? [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 12] p. 216, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Many shrink at the idea of making any sacrifice for others' good. They are not willing to suffer for the sake of helping others. They flatter themselves that it is not required of them to disadvantage themselves for the benefit of others. To such we will say, Jesus is our example. [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 13] p. 216, Para. 4, [1881MS].

When the request was made that the two sons of Zebedee might sit the one on his right hand and the other on his left in his kingdom, Jesus answered, "Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he said, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with, but to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." How many can answer, We can drink of the cup; we can be baptized with the baptism; and make the answer understandingly? How many imitate the great Exemplar? All who profess to be followers of Jesus Christ, in taking this step pledge themselves to walk even as he walked. Yet the course many pursue who make high profession shows that their lives are far from being in conformity to that of the great Pattern. They shape their course to meet their own imperfect standard. They do not imitate the self-denial of Christ, or his life of sacrifice for the good of others. [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 14] p. 216, Para. 5, [1881MS].

I once heard a wealthy farmer describe the situation of a poor widow living near him. He lamented her straitened circumstances, and then said, "I don't know how she is going to get along this cold winter. She has close times now." Such have forgotten the work of Christ, and by their acts say, "Nay, Lord, we cannot drink of the cup of self-denial, humiliation, and sacrifice you drank of, nor be baptized with the suffering you were baptized with. We cannot live to do others good. It is our business to take care of ourselves." [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 15] p. 217, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Who should know how the widow will get along, unless it be those who have well filled granaries? The means for her to get along is at hand; and dare those whom God has made his stewards, to whom he has intrusted means, withhold from the needy disciples of Christ? If so, they withhold from Jesus. Do you expect the Lord to rain down grain from Heaven to supply the needy? Has he not rather placed it in your hands to help and bless them through you? Has he not made you his instrument in this good work, to prove you, and to give you the privilege of laying up a treasure in Heaven? Hear what the prophet Isaiah says:-- [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 16] p. 217, Para. 2, [1881MS].

"Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday. And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 17] p. 217, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The fast is described which God can accept. "to deal thy bread to the hungry," and to "bring the poor that are cast out, to thy house." You are with one hand to reach up, and by faith take hold of the mighty arm which bringeth salvation, while with the other hand of love you reach the oppressed, and relieve them. It is impossible for you to fasten upon the arm of God with one hand, while the other is employed in administering to your own pleasure. [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 18] p. 218, Para. 1, [1881MS].

If you engage in this work of mercy and love, will it prove too hard for you? Will you fail, and be crushed under the burden, and your family be deprived of your assistance and influence? Oh, no! God has carefully removed all doubts upon this question by a pledge to you on condition of your obedience. This promise covers all the most exacting, the most hesitating, could crave: "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health spring forth speedily." Only believe that He is faithful that has promised. God can renew the physical strength; and more, he says he will do it. And the promise does not end here. "Thy righteousness shall go before thee. The glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward." God will build a fortification around you. Neither does the promise end at this point. "Thou shalt call, and the Lord shall answer. Thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am." If you put down oppression and remove the speaking of vanity, if you draw out your soul to the hungry, "then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday. The Lord shall guide thee continually, and

satisfy thy soul in drought [famine], and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and a spring of water, whose waters fail not." [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 19] p. 218, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Read Isa. 58, you who claim to be children of the light. Especially do you read it again and again who have felt so fearful to inconvenience yourselves by favoring the needy; you whose hearts and houses are too narrow to make a home for the homeless, read it. You who can see orphans and widows oppressed by the iron hand of poverty, and bowed down by the hardhearted worldlings, read it. [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 20] p. 218, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Are you afraid that an influence will be introduced into your family that will cost you more labor, read that chapter. Your fears may be groundless, and a blessing may come, known and realized by you every day. But if otherwise, if extra labor is called for, you can draw upon One who has promised: "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily." Why God's people are not more spiritually minded, and have no more faith, is because they are narrowed by selfishness. The prophet is addressing Christians; not sinners, not unbelievers, but those who make great pretensions to godliness. It is not the abundance of your meetings that God accepts. It is not the numerous prayers, but it is rightdoing,--doing the right thing, and at the right time. It is to be less self-caring, and more benevolent. Our souls must expand. Then God will make them like a watered garden, whose waters fail not. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 08-16-81 para. 21] p. 218, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Ministers should impress upon the people for whom they labor the importance of individual effort. No church can flourish unless its members are workers. The people must lift where the ministers lifts, thus seconding his efforts and helping him bear his burdens, and then he will not be overworked and become discouraged. There is no influence that can be brought to bear on a church that will be enduring unless the people shall move intelligently, from principle, to do all they can to forward the work. The individual members of the church should feel a responsibility resting upon them to overcome their own defects of character, and by doing this they encourage others to overcome. Those who profess to be Christians should arouse themselves, and take up their neglected duties; for the salvation of their own souls depends upon their individual efforts. Said the Prince of life, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." "Agonize," says the margin. There are vastly more seekers than strivers. Tame, halfhearted efforts will not insure success. There must be determined, persevering, untiring effort, proportionate to the value of eternal life, the object of our pursuit. We cannot trust to another to win the crown for us; we must individually fight the battles of the Lord. The ministers cannot save the people. He can be a channel through which God will impart light and knowledge; but after that light is given he cannot make the people walk in the light. Christ could not do this. It is left for those who have the light to appropriate the light, and in their turn let it shine forth in bright rays upon the pathway of others. [Cf: RH 08-23-81 para. 1] p. 219, Para. 1, [1881MS].

True Christians will represent Christ in deportment and in character. They will sanctify themselves through obedience to the truth, that the

people they would save may be influenced by their Christlike character, and see a beauty and harmony in the truth. Preachers and people will effect more for Christ by humble, devoted, and virtuous lives, that can be done by preaching where a godly example is wanting. Many, I fear, will not have zeal and earnestness to seek God for themselves, and know for themselves that Christ is formed in them the hope of glory. If they have the heart work, they can, if any man ask them, give a reason of the hope that is within them with meekness and fear. With meekness, because Jesus died for them as sinners that they might have eternal life; with meekness because there is no virtue or goodness in them. They are dependent upon Christ every moment for this great salvation. With fear, lest they fail to represent their faith, which to them is so precious, in such a manner as to convince unbelievers that they have the truth. The meekness of wisdom will be seen in their deportment. They have the evidence that they are built upon the sure foundation, and will stand amid the perils of the last days. They purify their souls through the truth to unfeigned love of the brethren. The fire of affliction may kindle upon them, and although the removal of imperfections from their characters may be to them a severe process, yet they will endure the test and trial so essential to their eternal good. [Cf: RH 08-23-81 para. 2] p. 219, Para. 2, [1881MS].

We are not, as Christians, doing one-twentieth part that we might do in winning souls to Christ. There is a world to be warned, and every sincere Christian will be a guide and an example to others in faithfulness, in cross bearing, in prompt and vigorous action, in unswerving fidelity to the cause of truth, and in sacrifices and labors to promote the cause of God. This is a great work. To meet the standard of God, men must be growing Christians, having root in themselves. Many are separated from God by wicked works, and need the help that growing Christians can give them by a holy life and godly example. When clouds and darkness overshadow us, we are inclined to seek for human sympathy; we do not take our burdens to Jesus; we do not exercise living faith in his promises. There is not a close searching of our own hearts to see if there is not some darling sin cherished, some idol that needs to be cast down in order to give Christ the entire heart's affections. [Cf: RH 08-23-81 para. 3] p. 220, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Said Christ, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." The promises contained in the word of God are exceedingly precious. The word of life, carefully and prayerfully studied, and practically obeyed, will thoroughly furnish us unto all good works. Ministers and people must learn to look to men less and to God more. He can save to the utmost all who put their trust in him. When power and grace in unlimited supply await our demand, why do we neglect to come in living faith for the things God knows we need, and that he longs to bestow upon us if we will only ask him in faith? [Cf: RH 08-23-81 para. 4] p. 220, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Enoch lived in a corrupt age, when moral power was very weak. Pollution was teeming all around him; yet he walked with God. He educated his mind to devotion,--to think on things that were pure and holy; and his conversation was upon holy and divine things. He was made a companion of God. He walked with him, and received his counsel. He had to contend with the same temptations that we do. The society surrounding him was no more friendly to righteousness than is the

society surrounding us at the present time. The atmosphere he breathed was tainted with sin and corruption, the same as ours; yet he was unsullied with the prevailing sins of the age in which he lived. And so may we remain as pure and uncorrupted as did the faithful Enoch. He was a representative of the saints living amid the perils and corruptions of the last days. For his faithful obedience to God, he was translated. So, also, those who are alive and remain, who are faithful, will be translated to Heaven. They will be removed from a sinful and corrupt world to the pure joys of Heaven. [Cf: RH 08-23-81 para. 5] p. 220, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The course of God's people should be upward and onward to victory. One is with us, even the Captain of our salvation, who has said for our encouragement? "Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." "Be of good cheer. I have overcome the world." He will lead us on to certain victory. What God promises, he is able at any time to perform. And the work he gives his people to do, he is able to accomplish by them. If we live a life of perfect obedience, his promises will be fulfilled to us. [Cf: RH 08-23-81 para. 6] p. 221, Para. 1, [1881MS].

God requires his people to shine as lights in the world. It is not merely the ministers who are required to do this, but every disciple of Christ. Their conversation should be heavenly. And while they enjoy communion with God, they will wish to have intercourse with their fellowmen, in order to express by their words and acts the love of God which animates their hearts. In this way will they be lights in the world, and the light transmitted through them will not go out, or be taken away. It will indeed become darkness to those who will not walk in it; but it will shine with increasing brightness on the path of those who will obey and walk in the light. [Cf: RH 08-23-81 para. 7] p. 221, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The Spirit, wisdom, and goodness of God, as revealed in his word, should be exemplified by the disciples of Christ. God's requirements of his people are in accordance with the grace and truth given them. All his righteous demands must be fully met. Accountable beings must walk in the light that shines upon them. If they fail to do this, their light becomes darkness, and the degree of darkness is according to the abundance of light possessed. [Cf: RH 08-23-81 para. 8] p. 221, Para. 3, [1881MS].

It is not for lack of knowledge that God's people are now perishing. They will not be condemned because they do not know the way, the truth, and the life. The truth that has reached their understanding, the light which has shone on the soul, that has not been cherished, and which they have neglected, or refused to be led by, will condemn them. What more could have been done for God's vineyard than has been done? Light, precious light, shines upon his people; but the light will not save them, unless they consent to be saved by it. [Cf: RH 08-23-81 para. 9] p. 221, Para. 4, [1881MS].

God calls upon his people to act. Will they awake? Will every one who professes godliness seek to put away every wrong, confess to God every secret sin, and afflict the soul before him? Will they, with great humility, investigate the motives of every action, and know that the eye of God reads all,--searches out every hidden thing? Let the work be

thorough, the consecration to God be entire. He calls for a full surrender of all that we have and are. Ministers and people need a new conversion,--a transformation of the mind,--without which we are not savorers of life unto life, but of death unto death. Great privileges belong to the people of God. Great light has been given them, that they may attain to their high calling in Christ Jesus; yet they are not what God would have them to be, and what he designs they should be. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 08-23-81 para. 10] p. 221, Para. 5, [1881MS].

God has made it the privilege and the duty of parents to become co-workers with himself in the education and training of their children. Parents are responsible, in a great degree, for the characters which their children develop. Would that every father and mother could see that in their own home is a missionary field in which they may work unitedly for the salvation of the precious souls committed to their care. [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 1] p. 222, Para. 1, [1881MS].

It is a sad fact, almost universally admitted and deplored, that the home education and training of the youth of today have been neglected. The father, as the head of his own household, should understand how to train his children for usefulness and duty. This is his special work, above every other. During the first few years of a child's life, the molding of the disposition is committed principally to the mother; but she should ever feel that in her work she has the cooperation of the father. If he is engaged in business which almost wholly closes the door of usefulness to his family, he should seek other employment which will not prevent him from devoting some time to his children. If he neglects them, he is unfaithful to the trust committed to him of God. [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 2] p. 222, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The father may exert an influence over his children which shall be stronger than the allurements of the world. He should study the disposition and character of the members of his little circle, that he may understand their needs and their dangers, and thus be prepared to repress the wrong and encourage the right. Parents should remember that occupation is essential for children. If their hands are kept active in useful employment, a door will be closed against the temptations of Satan. Let children be taught, when quite young, to bear the smaller responsibilities of life, and the faculties thus employed will strengthen by exercise. Thus the youth may become efficient helpers in the greater work which the Lord shall afterward call them to do. [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 3] p. 222, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Children and youth who are allowed to devote much of their time to amusement and pleasure seeking are never really happy; and in afterlife they will be unprepared for positions of trust. Few have been trained to habits of industry, thoughtfulness, and caretaking. Indolence, inaction, is the greatest curse to children of this age. Wholesome, useful labor, will be a great blessing, by promoting the formation of good habits and a noble character. [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 4] p. 222, Para. 4, [1881MS].

As they consider their duties and their responsibility, parents will often be led to inquire, Who is sufficient for these things? At times the heart may be ready to faint; but a living sense of the dangers threatening the present and future happiness of their loved ones, should lead Christian parents to seek more earnestly for help from the

Source of strength and wisdom. It should make them more circumspect, more decided, more calm yet firm, while they watch for these souls, as they that must give account. [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 5] p. 222, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Parents should study the best and most successful manner of winning the love and confidence of their children, that they may lead them in the right path. They should reflect the sunshine of love upon the household. There are no influences so potent, no memories so enduring, as those of childhood. The parents' work must begin with the child in its infancy, that it may receive the right impress of character ere the world shall place its stamp on mind and heart. [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 6] p. 223, Para. 1, [1881MS].

While the spirit of love should pervade the household, it is the duty of parents not to be ruled, but to rule. All under the roof should respect the parental discipline. The law of the household should be held sacred. Parents should bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. By their own example they should lead the way to Heaven. The father, as priest of the household, should explain and enforce the word of God. Let the children be taught to honor and obey their parents, that they may also learn to honor and obey their Heavenly Father. Parents stand in God's place to their little ones. When fathers and mothers realize this, they will find at home a field wherein to exercise their powers for the accomplishment of great good. [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 7] p. 223, Para. 2, [1881MS].

There are two ways to deal with children,--ways that differ widely in principle and in results. Faithfulness and love, united with wisdom and firmness, in accordance with the teachings of God's word, will bring happiness in this life and in the next. Neglect of duty, injudicious indulgence, failure to restrain or correct the follies of youth, will result in unhappiness and final ruin to the children, and disappointment and anguish to the parents. [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 8] p. 223, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The history of Eli is a terrible example of the results of parental unfaithfulness. Through his neglect of duty, his sons became a snare to their fellow men and an offense to God, forfeiting not only the present but the future life. Their evil example destroyed hundreds, and the influence of these hundreds corrupted the morals of thousands. This case should be a warning to all parents. While some err upon the side of undue severity. Eli went to the opposite extreme. He indulged his sons to their ruin. Their faults were overlooked in their childhood, and excused in their days of youth. The commands of the parents were disregarded, and the father did not enforce obedience. The children saw that they could hold the lines of control, and they improved the opportunity. As the sons advanced in years, they lost all respect for their faint-hearted father. They went on in sin without restraint. He remonstrated with them, but his words fell unheeded. Gross sins and revolting crimes were daily committed by them, until the Lord himself visited with judgment the transgressors of his law. [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 9] p. 223, Para. 4, [1881MS].

We have seen the result of Eli's mistaken kindness,--death to the indulgent father, ruin and death to his wicked sons, and destruction to thousands in Israel. The Lord himself decreed that for the sins of

Eli's sons no atonement should be made by sacrifice or offering forever. How great, how lamentable, was their fall,--men upon whom rested sacred responsibilities, proscribed, outlawed from mercy, by a just and holy God! [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 10] p. 224, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Such is the fearful reaping of the harvest sown when parents neglect their God given responsibilities,--when they allow Satan to preoccupy the field which they themselves should carefully have sown with precious seed of virtue, truth, and righteousness. If but one parent is neglectful of duty, the result will be seen in the character of the children; if both fail, how great will be their accountability before God! How can they escape the doom of those who destroy their children's souls? [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 11] p. 224, Para. 2, [1881MS].

It were well for parents to learn from the man of Uz a lesson of steadfastness and devotion. Job did not neglect his duty to those outside of his household; he was benevolent, kind, thoughtful of the interest of others; and at the same time he labored earnestly for the salvation of his own family. Amid the festivities of his sons and daughters, he trembled lest his children should displease God. As a faithful priest of the household, he offered sacrifices for them individually. He knew the offensive character of sin, and the thought that his children might forget the divine claims, led him to God as an intercessor in their behalf. [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 12] p. 224, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The will of God is the law of Heaven. As long as that law was the rule of life, all the family of God were holy and happy. But when the divine law was disobeyed, then envy, jealousy, and strife were introduced, and a part of the inhabitants of Heaven fell. As long as God's law is revered in our earthly homes, the family will be happy. The authority of the parents should be absolute; yet this power is not to be abused. In the control of his children, the father should not be governed by caprice, but by the Bible standard. When he permits his own harsh traits of character to bear sway, he becomes a despot. Imperfect man, not the all-wise and merciful Heavenly Father, then makes laws which become a crushing burden. [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 13] p. 224, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Prompt and continual obedience to wise parental rule, will promote the happiness of the children themselves, as well as the honor of God and the good society. Children should learn that in submission to the laws of the household is their perfect liberty. Christians will learn the same lesson,--that in their obedience to God's law is their perfect freedom. [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 14] p. 224, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The parent who permits his rule to become a despotism, is making a terrible mistake. He wrongs not only his children but himself, quenching in their young hearts the love that would flow out in acts and words of affection. Kindness, forbearance, and love, manifested to children, will be reflected back upon the parents. That which they sow, they will also reap. [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 15] p. 225, Para. 1, [1881MS].

While educating and disciplining their children, parents are in a continual school. It is impossible for them to teach self-control,

unless they first learn to govern themselves. Fathers and mothers may study their own character in their children. They may often read humiliating lessons, as they see their own imperfections reproduced in their sons and daughters. While seeking to repress and correct in their children hereditary tendencies to evil, parents should call to their aid double patience, perseverance, and love. God has apportioned them their work, and he will require it at their hands. No minister or friend can supply their place. The harder the battle, the greater their need of help from their Heavenly Father, and the more marked will be the victory gained. [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 16] p. 225, Para. 2, [1881MS].

There is no discharge in this work. Parents should labor with reference to the future harvest. While they sow in tears, amid many discouragements, it should be with earnest prayer. They may see the promise of but a late and scanty harvest, yet that should not prevent the sowing. They should sow beside all waters, embracing every opportunity both to improve themselves and to benefit their children. Such seed sowing will not be in vain. At the harvest time, many faithful parents will return with joy, bringing their sheaves with them. [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 17] p. 225, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Parents, if you would succeed in this great work, you must have Christ enthroned in the heart. As an honored guest, he must be earnestly invited to the home circle. It is not enough merely to speak to your children of spiritual things. They must see you exemplify the principles of Christianity in your home. The power of divine grace should control all the regulations of the household. Let it be seen in your simplicity in dress and in the preparation of your food. All these things, as well as the society you choose, the amusements in which you indulge, and the whole round of duties of daily life, will have an abiding influence upon the characters of your children. [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 18] p. 225, Para. 4, [1881MS].

While you seek to administer justice, remember that she has a twin sister, which is mercy. The two stand side by side, and should not be separated. Be careful not to alienate the affections of your children by undue severity. Never correct them in anger. Many professedly Christian parents do this; but they make the case far worse than if they had administered no correction. They commit a greater sin than that of which the child has been guilty. Take time to reflect calmly and candidly before you correct your children, and then bow with them in prayer, interceding with God in their behalf. In most cases this will soften the hardest heart, and the object will be gained without using the rod. Oh, if this course were pursued, how many precious children might be won to obedience and love, and thus find happiness in this life, and through Christ secure the future life! [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 19] p. 225, Para. 5, [1881MS].

I entreat parents, and ministers also, to devote more time and attention to the children. Bring them to Jesus, as did the mothers of old, and intercede for his blessing upon them. Jesus loves all children, and he has a special care for the children of those who have given themselves to him in willing service. In his charge to Peter, the Saviour first bade him, "Feed my lambs." and afterward commanded him, "Feed my sheep." In addressing the apostle, Christ says to all his ministers, "Feed my lambs." [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 20] p. 226, Para.

1, [1881MS].

When Jesus admonished the disciples not to despise the little ones, he addressed all disciples, in all ages. His own love and care for children is a precious example for his followers. If teachers in the Sabbath school felt the love which they should feel for these lambs of the flock, many more would be won to the fold of Christ. At every suitable opportunity, let the story of Jesus's love be repeated to the children. In every sermon, let a little corner be left for the benefit of the children. The servant of Christ may have lasting friends in these little ones, and his words may be to them as apples of gold in pictures of silver. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 08-30-81 para. 21] p. 226, Para. 2, [1881MS].

What can be done to maintain spiritual life and prosperity in our scattered churches? Many of these have but a small membership, and enjoy little or no preaching. Must they become weak and sickly, and permit discouragement to come upon them? No, never! If there are but six working members, each of these should feel a responsibility to keep up the interest of the church. Men who know how to conduct worldly business successfully should employ their talents for the upbuilding of the cause of God among them. The members of the church should give diligent attention to the word of God, that they may understand their duty, and then labor with all the energies of mind and heart to make their church one of the most prosperous in the land. [Cf: RH 09-06-81 para. 1] p. 226, Para. 3, [1881MS].

When Christ ascended, he left the church and all its interests as a sacred trust to his followers, bidding them see that it was kept in a flourishing condition. This work cannot be left to the ministers alone, or to a few leading men. Every member should feel that he has entered into a solemn covenant with the Lord to work for the best interests of his cause at all times and under all circumstances. Each should have some part to act, some burden to bear, thus investing something in time and interest, for the life and prosperity of the church. If all thus felt an individual responsibility, they would make greater advancement in spiritual things. The solemn burden resting upon them would cause them often to seek God in prayer for strength and grace. [Cf: RH 09-06-81 para. 2] p. 226, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The real character of the church is measured, not by the high profession she makes, not by the names enrolled upon the church book, but by what she is actually doing for the Master, by the number of her persevering, faithful workers. Personal interest, and vigilant, individual effort will accomplish more for the cause of Christ than can be wrought by sermons or creeds. [Cf: RH 09-06-81 para. 3] p. 227, Para. 1, [1881MS].

True Christians, the world over, will be Christlike. Said the Saviour, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." And again, "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." This evidence is conclusive. If Christ dwells in the heart, the precious fruits of his Spirit will as a natural result be manifested in the life. If Satan controls the mind, evil traits will as surely be apparent. [Cf: RH 09-06-81 para. 4] p. 227, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Those who profess to be disciples of Christ, while in works they deny him, are serving Satan in disguise, robing themselves in the garments of righteousness to conceal a worldly, selfish, unregenerate nature. Their profession presents a false light to the world. In the field, in the workshop, in the family circle, in the church, they reveal the sad fact that their religion consists in hollow formalism. They are constantly exerting an influence contrary to true godliness. [Cf: RH 09-06-81 para. 5] p. 227, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Our Saviour has made it the duty of his followers to prove to the world that while Christianity will lead to industry and economy, to energy and zeal in the interest of the church and the cause of God everywhere, it will also condemn avarice, overreaching, and every other form of dishonesty. We need God's presence to control, his wisdom to guide us in all the affairs of life. We cannot afford to separate ourselves from him in the smallest transaction. No bargain is ever made in which God has not an interest. We cannot exclude him from any matter in which the rights of his offspring are concerned. Unwavering integrity marked the character and the life of Christ. It was one of the principles of Heaven, thus exemplified on earth. If the course of his professed followers is contrary to the life given them as a pattern, they show that they have no part in him. [Cf: RH 09-06-81 para. 6] p. 227, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Satan will come with his temptations to every Christian as he came to Christ. "Be not overscrupulous," he whispers, "in regard to honor and honesty. If you would succeed in getting gain, you must look out sharply for your own interests." Many listen to these suggestions, and blindly peril their hope of eternal life for worldly, temporal gain. But though they may for a time appear to prosper, the end will be bitterness and woe. [Cf: RH 09-06-81 para. 7] p. 227, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Says the apostle James, "Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works." "Faith without works is dead." Every man will manifest in his life all the faith that he has. The Christian's unselfish zeal and earnestness in the cause of truth will make its impression upon the minds of all associated with him. Those who are out of Christ have a constant evidence of the power of divine grace, in the kindness, forbearance, and integrity of his faithful followers. Such Christians render effectual service to their Master. [Cf: RH 09-06-81 para. 8] p. 227, Para. 6, [1881MS].

That church whose members feel that they are not responsible for its prosperity will fail to show to the world the unity, love, and harmony that exist with the true children of God. Worldlings are constantly watching and criticising with keenness and severity those who profess to love and serve God, yet who show by their lives that they are strangers to the influence of divine grace. "It is too bad," says the unbeliever, "to spoil a good worldling to make a bad Christian. That man is as sharp and eager to advance his own interests as before he professed religion. And what an unchristian spirit he manifests. How he loves to exalt himself. How unkindly he speaks of others. He sees something to find fault with in every man's character. I tell you, although he belongs to the church, that man will need watching. There is another who is harsh and severe with those whom he employs. He is

impatient even to the animals under his control, and abuses them as if they had no feeling. Such men have made no change for the better." In too many cases this is a true picture. What a barrier have such professed Christians erected to hinder sinners from coming to Christ! They are a curse to their families, and a curse to the church. Christ's true disciples will manifest his meekness and gentleness in strong contrast to the storm and bluster and bravado of the great adversary and his followers. [Cf: RH 09-06-81 para. 9] p. 228, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The second great commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," will be faithfully kept by all true Christians. Our influence will be perpetuated. Our example, whether good or evil, will live when we are no more. Then let us so live that those with whom we associate may see and feel that we are governed by the divine rule, full of wisdom and love. This is the strongest argument that can be presented in favor of the religion we profess. A pure, unselfish Christian life will prove to all beholders that there is a divine reality in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Dear Christian friends, I repeat, if you are Christ's, you will work the works of Christ, and not the works of Satan. Jesus dwelling in the heart will be exemplified in the words, in the deportment, in all the acts and purposes of life. Such Christians will have favor with God and with men. Peace and joy are shed around their pathway, and glory is reflected back to God. [Cf: RH 09-06-81 para. 10] p. 228, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Our churches are sadly destitute of spirituality. They have a correct theory of truth, and, satisfied with this, they have indulged a spirit of pride and boasting, while they greatly lack the power of godliness. These churches must be aroused. Their members must seek an experience for themselves. If connected with the Living Vine, they will be nourished by it, and will bring forth fruit in good works. [Cf: RH 09-06-81 para. 11] p. 228, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Our religion requires self-denial, self-sacrifice, at every step. Jesus came down from Heaven to teach us how to live; and while on earth he went about doing good. Those who are really representatives of Christ are working for the good of others. They delight in advancing the cause of God both at home and abroad. They are seen and heard, and their influence is felt, at the prayer meeting. They will try to supply the place of the minister, whose labors they cannot have. They do not seek to exalt self, or to receive credit for doing a great work, but labor humbly, meekly, faithfully, doing small errands or doing a greater work, if necessary, because Christ has done so much for them. [Cf: RH 09-06-81 para. 12] p. 229, Para. 1, [1881MS].

It is because we have departed from God that he has withdrawn his Spirit from us. If the members of our churches will work unitedly with interest and zeal in the cause of Christ, the Holy Spirit will attend their efforts, and the power of God will again be seen among his people. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 09-06-81 para. 13] p. 229, Para. 2, [1881MS].

We are living in an evil time. Iniquity abounds. Satan is working with all his power and cunning to ensnare and destroy. There is no class in greater danger than the young; but our Heavenly Father sees the temptations which surround the youth, and he invites them to come to

him for strength to resist evil and to stand firm for the right. The fear of the Lord will be as a shield to the youthful heart, to turn aside the fiery darts of the adversary. The Holy Scriptures, as a light upon the path of life, will keep the feet of the young as well as the old from becoming entangled in the snares of Satan. [Cf: RH 09-13-81 para. 1] p. 229, Para. 3, [1881MS].

God's ancient people were admonished faithfully to instruct their children in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord. "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates." This was to be regarded as the most important of parental duties. [Cf: RH 09-13-81 para. 2] p. 229, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Israel were also required to preserve memorials of the wonderful deliverances which the Lord had wrought for his people. When their children should ask, "What mean ye by these tokens?" the parents were to rehearse the story of God's care and love. Thus the mighty manifestations of divine power would never be forgotten, and the youth would see the justice of God's claims to their heartfelt obedience, their willing service. [Cf: RH 09-13-81 para. 3] p. 229, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The words spoken to fathers in ancient times are as verily addressed to fathers today. There is no excuse for the neglect to instruct children concerning present truth and the fulfillment of the prophecies for this time. In our experience as a people we have had precious tokens of God's favor, solemn manifestations of his power, which are as valuable to our children as were his wonderful works in olden times to the children of ancient Israel. When parents shall manifest such an interest for their children as God would have them, he will hear their prayers, and work with their efforts; but God does not propose to do the work which he has left for parents to do. It is because of the wicked neglect of fathers and mothers that so many of the youth are left to go to ruin. In most cases, parents are responsible for the weak morals and infidel sentiments of their children. They have failed to restrain and guard them, and have not given them right instruction, and a good example in their own life. Society is far below what it might be, if parents would do their duty to their children, in obedience to God's requirements. [Cf: RH 09-13-81 para. 4] p. 229, Para. 6, [1881MS].

One of the surest safeguards for the young is useful occupation. Had they been trained to industrious habits, so that all their hours were usefully employed, they would have no time for repining at their lot or for idle daydreaming. They would be in little danger of forming vicious habits or associations. Let the youth be taught from childhood that there is no excellence without great labor. Aspirations for eminence will not avail. Young friends, the mountaintop cannot be reached by standing still, and wishing yourselves there. You can gain your object only by taking one step at a time, advancing slowly perhaps, but holding every step gained. It is the energetic, persevering worker that will scale the Alps. Every youth should make the most of his talents, by improving to the utmost present opportunities. He who will do this,

may reach almost any height in moral and intellectual attainments. But he must possess a brave and resolute spirit. He will need to close his ears to the voice of pleasure; he must often refuse the solicitations of young companions. He must stand on guard continually, lest he be diverted from his purpose. [Cf: RH 09-13-81 para. 5] p. 230, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Many parents remove from their country homes to the city, regarding it as a more desirable or profitable location. But by making this change they expose their children to many and great temptations. The boys have no employment, and they obtain a street education, and go on from one step in depravity to another, until they lose all interest in anything that is good and pure and holy. How much better had the parents remained with their families in the country, where the influences are most favorable for physical and mental strength. Let the youth be taught to labor in tilling the soil, and let them sleep the sweet sleep of weariness and innocence. [Cf: RH 09-13-81 para. 6] p. 230, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Through the neglect of parents, the youth in our cities are corrupting their ways and polluting their souls before God. This will ever be the fruit of idleness. The almshouses, the prisons, and the gallows publish the sorrowful tale of the neglected duties of parents. [Cf: RH 09-13-81 para. 7] p. 230, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Fathers and mothers too often leave their children to choose for themselves their amusements, their companions, and their occupation. The result is such as might reasonably be expected. Leave a field uncultivated, and it will grow up to thorns and briars. You will never see a lovely flower or a choice shrub peering above the unsightly, poisonous weeds. The worthless bramble will grow luxuriantly without thought or care, while plants that are valued for use or beauty require thorough culture. Thus it is with our youth. If right habits are formed, and right principles established, there is earnest work to be done. If wrong habits are corrected, diligence and perseverance are required to accomplish the task. [Cf: RH 09-13-81 para. 8] p. 231, Para. 1, [1881MS].

It has been truly said, "Show me your company, and I will show you your character." The young fail to realize how sensibly both their character and their reputation are affected by their choice of associates. A person seeks the company of those whose tastes, habits, and practices are most congenial to his own. When one prefers the society of the ignorant and vicious to that of the wise and good, he shows that his own character is defective. At first his tastes and habits and those of his companions might have been dissimilar; but as he mingles with this class, his thoughts and feelings change, he sacrifices right principles, and insensibly yet unavoidably loses his distinctive character, and comes down to the lower level of his companions. As the stream always partakes of the properties of the soil through which it runs, so the principles and habits of youth become invariably tinged by the character of the company in which they mingle. [Cf: RH 09-13-81 para. 9] p. 231, Para. 2, [1881MS].

More than human wisdom is needed by parents at every step, that they may understand how best to educate their children for a useful, happy life here, and for higher service and greater joy hereafter. Fathers

and mothers, ever remember that to you is committed a sacred trust. The power of example is very great. If you fail to select proper society for your children, and allow them to associate with persons of questionable morals, you place them or permit them, to place themselves, in a school where lessons of depravity will be taught and practiced. You may feel that your children are strong enough to withstand temptation; but how can you be sure of this? It is far easier to yield to evil influences than to resist them. Ere you are aware of it, your children may become imbued with the spirit of their associates, and may be degraded and ruined. [Cf: RH 09-13-81 para. 10] p. 231, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Fathers and mothers, it is your duty to give more earnest and careful attention to your children. Guard their principles and their habits as the apple of your eye. Allow them to associate with no one with whose character you are not well acquainted. Permit them to form no intimacy until you are assured that it will do them no harm. Accustom your children to trust to your judgment and experience. Teach them that you have a clearer perception of character than they in their inexperience can have, and that your decisions must not be disregarded. [Cf: RH 09-13-81 para. 11] p. 231, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Christian parents, I entreat you to awake. Have a jealous care for the souls of your children. Do not allow your time and attention to be so fully absorbed in other things that you cannot properly instruct your sons and daughters. If you neglect your duty and shirk your responsibility, expecting the Lord to do your work, you will be disappointed. When you have faithfully done all that you can do, bring your children to Jesus, and with earnest, persevering faith, make intercession for them. The Lord will be your helper; he will work with your efforts; in his strength you will gain the victory. In the great gathering day it shall be yours to say with joy, "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me." By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 09-13-81 para. 12] p. 232, Para. 1, [1881MS].

"I Am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman." Our Heavenly Father planted on earth a goodly vine, whose fruit would impart to the children of men eternal life. But this precious plant appeared to human eyes as a root out of dry ground, seeming to have no form nor comeliness. When it was claimed to be of heavenly origin, the men of Nazareth became enraged, and cast it from them. The inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem took this vine of God's own planting, and bruised it, and trampled it under foot, hoping thus to destroy it forever. But now the Husbandman removed his precious vine, and planted it in his own garden, beyond the spoiler's reach. The stock and root were concealed from human sight, but still "the branches run over the wall." Thus grafts could be united to the vine, and, partaking of its nourishment, these became branches, and flourished and brought forth fruit. [Cf: RH 09-20-81 para. 1] p. 232, Para. 2, [1881MS].

This figure of the vine is a perfect symbol. God sent his Son from the heavenly courts to a world seared and marred with the curse. In Christ was righteousness, peace, life--every blessing necessary for man's happiness. But the world hated the Son of the infinite God. The world saw nothing attractive in him. The best gift of Heaven was slighted and spurned. Christ was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." Yet "he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our

iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." Christ was hated by evil men because his character was spotless, his works righteous. He came to be the Redeemer of the world, yet he was taken by wicked hands, and shamefully entreated, and crucified. God raised him from the dead, and he ascended to Heaven to present his blood as the propitiation for our sins. [Cf: RH 09-20-81 para. 2] p. 232, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Though hidden from mortal sight, Christ still lives as the world's Redeemer, the representative of man in the heavenly courts, and the medium through whom all blessings flow to the fallen race. Said the Saviour to his disciples, "I am the vine, ye are the branches. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me." In this vine is all spiritual life. From Christ's fullness alone can we obtain nourishment unto eternal life. The vine stock is unseen; but the branches,--members of his body,--are visible. The scion which before was leafless and apparently lifeless, becomes, when grafted into the vine, a partaker of its life and fatness. Fiber by fiber, and vein by vein, the graft adheres to the parent stock, till the lifegiving sap flows to the adopted member, causing it to bud, and blossom, and bear fruit. [Cf: RH 09-20-81 para. 3] p. 232, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The scion becomes a part of the living vine by forming a perfect union with it. Thus it is with the sinner. By repentance and faith, he becomes connected with Jesus Christ, and lives in him. This connection joins soul to soul,--the finite with the infinite. But, contrary to nature, the branch which has been united with the true vine brings forth, not fruit of its own kind, but the fruit of the vine of which it has become a part. The Spirit of Christ, flowing into the hearts of all who are indeed united with him, makes them partakers of the divine nature. They become pure, even as he is pure. Yet true disciples are the last to claim as their own this precious fruit. "Accepted in the Beloved," objects of their Heavenly Father's constant care and unflinching mercy, they feel unworthy of the divine favor, and have too vivid a sense of utter dependence upon God to boast of their exalted position. [Cf: RH 09-20-81 para. 4] p. 233, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Every branch of the vine, subjected to the pruning of the wise Husbandman, will bring forth clusters of precious fruit. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." The branch can maintain its connection with the living vine only on condition that it bear fruit. Said Christ, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love." And to each disciple is addressed the solemn warning, "Every branch in me [every one who claims connection with me] that beareth not fruit, he taketh away." Such a one is after a time overcome by temptation, and at last wholly separated from Christ. [Cf: RH 09-20-81 para. 5] p. 233, Para. 2, [1881MS].

It is a sad fact that many who profess to be branches of the true vine show by their lives that they have no connection with it. Their words and actions, destitute of grace and meekness, resemble the stinging branches of the noxious thorn tree, rather than the lovely, fruit laden boughs of the precious vine. Love to God and love to our neighbor is the sum and substance of true piety. Those who are destitute of this love, and yet claim high attainments in spiritual things, may for a

time deceive their fellow men, but they cannot deceive God. Says the True Witness, "I know thy works." And in the great day of final accounts, God "will render to every man according to his deeds." [Cf: RH 09-20-81 para. 6] p. 233, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Many who claim to be followers of Christ are withered branches, that must ere long be separated from the living vine. The love of the world has paralyzed their spirituality, and they are not awake to the precious theme of redemption. The impression made upon the world by these professed Christians is unfavorable to the religion of Christ. Such dull, careless ones manifest ambition and zeal in the business of the world, but they have little interest in things of eternal importance. The voice of God through his messengers is a pleasant song; but its sacred warnings, reproofs, and encouragements are all unheeded. Eternal interests are placed on a level with common things. The Holy Spirit is grieved, and its influence is withdrawn. [Cf: RH 09-20-81 para. 7] p. 233, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Fruitful Christians are connected with God, and hence they are able to place a right value upon eternal things. The truth and the love of God are their meditation. They have feasted upon the words of life, and whenever they listen to the "message of glad tidings," they can say, as did the disciples to whom Christ explained the prophecies on the way to Emmaus, "Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" It is the duty of every child of God to store his mind with divine truth; and the more he does this, the more strength and clearness of mind he will have to fathom the deep things of God. And he will be more and more earnest and vigorous, as the principles of truth are carried out in his daily life. [Cf: RH 09-20-81 para. 8] p. 234, Para. 1, [1881MS].

That which will bless humanity is spiritual life. He who is in harmony with God, will constantly depend upon him for strength. "Be ye therefore perfect, as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." It should be our life work to be constantly reaching forward to the perfection of Christian character, ever striving for conformity to the will of God. The efforts begun here will continue through eternity. The advancement made here will be ours when we enter upon the future life. [Cf: RH 09-20-81 para. 9] p. 234, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Those who are partakers of Christ's meekness, purity, and love, will be joyful in God, and will shed light and gladness upon all around them. The thought that Christ died to obtain for us the gift of everlasting life, is enough to call forth from our hearts the most sincere and fervent gratitude, and from our lips the most enthusiastic praise. God's promises are rich, and full, and free. Whoever will, in the strength of Christ, comply with the conditions, may claim these promises, with all their wealth of blessing, as his own. And being thus abundantly supplied from the treasure house of God, he may, in the journey of life, "walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing;" by a godly example blessing his fellow men, and honoring his Creator. While our Saviour would guard his followers from self-confidence by the reminder, "Without me, ye can do nothing," he has coupled with it for our encouragement the gracious assurance, "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 09-20-81 para. 10] p. 234, Para. 3, [1881MS].

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." [Cf: RH 09-27-81 para. 1] p. 234, Para. 4, [1881MS].

What a contrast between the words of the Divine Teacher, and the language of those who claim that Christ came to abrogate the Father's law, and to do away with the Old Testament! Our Saviour, who knew all things, understood the wiles of Satan, the snares by which he would seek to entrap the children of men, and hence made this positive statement to meet the questioning doubts and the blind unbelief of all coming time. [Cf: RH 09-27-81 para. 2] p. 235, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The ceremonial law, given by God through Moses, with its sacrifices and ordinances, was to be binding upon the Hebrews until type met antitype in the death of Christ as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. Then all the sacrificial offerings and services were to be abolished. Paul and the other apostles labored to show this, and resolutely withstood those Judaizing teachers who declared that Christians should observe the ceremonial law. [Cf: RH 09-27-81 para. 3] p. 235, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The law of ten precepts, spoken from Mount Sinai, Christ himself declares that he came not to destroy. This testimony should forever settle the question. The law of God is as immutable as the throne of Jehovah. It will maintain its claims upon all mankind in all ages, unchanged by time or place or circumstances. The ritual system was of an altogether different character, added to guard the ten precepts of the Eternal. [Cf: RH 09-27-81 para. 4] p. 235, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Christ declares, that he came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill,--"to magnify the law and make it honorable," as Isaiah, hundreds of years before, had prophesied would be the Messiah's work. [Cf: RH 09-27-81 para. 5] p. 235, Para. 4, [1881MS].

"To fulfill the law." By his own life he gives the children of men an example of perfect obedience to that law. In the sermon on the mount he made clear and distinct its every precept, in order to sweep away the rubbish of erroneous tradition, with which the Jews had encumbered its sacred statutes, to illustrate and enforce its principles, and to show in all its particulars the length and breadth and height and depth of the righteousness required by the law of God. [Cf: RH 09-27-81 para. 6] p. 235, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The Pharisees were dissatisfied with the teachings of Christ. The practical godliness which he enjoined condemned them. They desired him to dwell upon the external observances of the ceremonial law, and the customs and traditions of the fathers. But Jesus teaches the spiritual nature of the law and its far-reaching claims. Love to God and to men must dwell in the heart and control the life,--the spring of every thought and every action. [Cf: RH 09-27-81 para. 7] p. 235, Para. 6, [1881MS].

Christ declares, "Verily I say unto you,"--making the assertion as emphatic as possible,--"Till Heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled." Here Christ teaches, not merely what had been and were then the claims of God's law upon mankind, but what shall be its claims so long as the

heavens and the earth remain. [Cf: RH 09-27-81 para. 8] p. 235, Para. 7, [1881MS].

There is perfect harmony between the law of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ. "I and my Father are one," says the Great Teacher. The gospel of Christ is the good news of grace, or favor, by which man may be released from the condemnation of sin, and enabled to render obedience to the law of God. The gospel points to the moral code as a rule of life. That law, by its demands for undeviating obedience, is continually pointing the sinner to the gospel for pardon and peace. [Cf: RH 09-27-81 para. 9] p. 236, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Says the great apostle, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid. Yea, we establish the law." And again he declares that "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." Enjoining supreme love to God, and equal love to our fellow men, it is indispensable alike to the glory of God and to human happiness. [Cf: RH 09-27-81 para. 10] p. 236, Para. 2, [1881MS].

After the fall, it had been impossible for man with his sinful nature to render obedience to the law of God, had not Christ, by the offer of his own life, purchased the right to lift up the race where they could once more work in harmony with its requirements. [Cf: RH 09-27-81 para. 11] p. 236, Para. 3, [1881MS].

There are persons professing to be ministers of Christ, who declare with the utmost assurance that no man ever did or ever can keep the law of God. But, according to the Scriptures, Christ "took upon himself our nature," he "was made in fashion as a man." He was man's example, man's representative, and he declares of himself, "I have kept my Father's commandments." The beloved disciple urges that every follower of Christ "ought himself also so to walk even as He walked." All who are Christ's will follow the example of Christ. All who justify the sinner in his transgression of God's law, belong to that class of whom our Saviour said, "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of Heaven." They can have no part with Him who came to magnify the law and make it honorable. They are deceiving the people with their sophistry,--saying to the sinner, "It shall be well with thee," when God has declared that "the soul that sinneth ["transgresseth the law"] it shall die." [Cf: RH 09-27-81 para. 12] p. 236, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Christ's words are both explicit and comprehensive. "Whosoever"--minister or layman, wise or ignorant--"shall break one of these least commandments"--willfully or presumptuously, as did Adam and Eve--is included in the condemnation. Breaking one of the commandments makes man a commandment breaker. [Cf: RH 09-27-81 para. 13] p. 236, Para. 5, [1881MS].

"Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." No excuse can avail for him who strictly obeys nine of the precepts of God's law, but ventures to break one because it is for his profit or convenience to do so. God demands implicit obedience to all his requirements. [Cf: RH 09-27-81 para. 14] p. 236, Para. 6, [1881MS].

"And shall teach men so." This is a point worthy of careful

consideration. Christ foresaw that men would not only break the commandments of God themselves, but would in a special sense teach others to break them. Every Sabbath breaker is by his example teaching others to transgress. But some are not content with this. They defend the sin of breaking the fourth commandment, and pervert the word of God to justify the transgressor. Such persons shall be of no esteem in the reign of Heaven,--shall have no part there. But the greatest guilt rests upon the professed watchmen, and they will receive the severest punishment. They are in the highest sense enemies of Christ, as they put on, over corrupt hearts, the livery of Heaven to serve the devil in. They do not hesitate to speak evil of the law, and even make those who do not study the Bible for themselves, believe that the curse of God is upon them if they keep it. All we have to do, say they, is to believe in Christ,--come to Christ. The most fatal delusion of the Christian world in this generation is, that in pouring contempt on the law of God they think they are exalting Christ. What a position! In so doing, they array Christ against Christ. It was Christ who spoke the law from Sinai. It was Christ who gave the law to Moses, engraven on tables of stone. It was his Father's law; and Christ says, "I and my Father are one." The Pharisees held the reverse of the modern position, but were in just as great an error. They rejected Christ, but exalted the law. And it makes little difference which position we take, so long as we ignore the true one,--that faith in Christ must be accompanied by obedience to the law of God. [Cf: RH 09-27-81 para. 15] p. 237, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Now, while we point the sinner to Jesus Christ as the one who can take away sin, we must explain to him what sin is, and show him the necessity of being saved from his sins, not in them. He must be made to feel that he must cease to transgress the law of God, which is to cease to sin. Paul makes the inquiry many years after the death of Christ, "Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Thus saying, Paul exalts the moral law. When this law is practically carried out in everyday life, it is found indeed to be the wisdom of God. It serves to detect sin. It discovers the defects in the moral character, and in the light of the law sin becomes exceeding sinful, revealing its true character in all its hideousness. [Cf: RH 09-27-81 para. 16] p. 237, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The law of God given from Sinai is a copy of the mind and will of the Infinite God. It is sacredly revered by the holy angels. Obedience to its requirements will perfect Christian character, and restore man, through Christ, to his condition before the fall. [Cf: RH 09-27-81 para. 17] p. 237, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The sins forbidden in the law could never find place in Heaven. It was the love of God to man that prompted him to express his will in the ten precepts of the decalogue. And when, through sin, man's understanding became darkened, God came down upon Mount Sinai and spoke his law with an audible voice, and wrote it on tables of stone. Afterward he showed his love for man by sending prophets and teachers to declare his law. [Cf: RH 09-27-81 para. 18] p. 237, Para. 4, [1881MS].

God has given man a complete rule of life in his law. Obeyed, he shall live by it, through the merits of Christ. Transgressed, it has power to condemn. The law sends men to Christ, and Christ points them back to

the law. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 09-27-81 para. 19] p. 238, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Our Redeemer perfectly understood the wants of humanity. He who condescended to take upon himself man's nature was acquainted with man's weakness. Christ lived as our example. He was tempted in all points as we are, that he might know how to succor all who should be tempted. He has trodden the path of life before us, and endured the severest tests in our behalf. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. Christ took upon himself our infirmities, and in the weakness of humanity he needed to seek strength from his Father. He was often to be found in earnest prayer, in the grove, by the lakeside, and in the mountains. He has enjoined upon us to watch and pray. It is the neglect of watchfulness and close searching of heart that leads to self-sufficiency and spiritual pride. Without a deep sense of our need of help from God, there will be but little earnest, heartfelt prayer for divine aid. Our hearts are deceitful; our foes, many and vigilant. If we neglect to fortify a single weak point in our character, Satan will assail us at that point with his temptations. He is constantly plotting the ruin of the soul, and he will take every advantage of our careless security. [Cf: RH 10-11-81 para. 1] p. 238, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Christ came to our world to engage in single-handed combat with this enemy of man, and thus to wrest the race from Satan's grasp. In the accomplishment of this object, he withheld not his own life. And now, in the strength that Christ will give, man must stand for himself, a faithful sentinel against the wily, plotting foe. Says the great apostle, "Walk circumspectly,"--guard every avenue of the soul, look constantly to Jesus, the true and perfect pattern, and seek to imitate his example, not in one or two points merely, but in all things. We shall then be prepared for any and every emergency. Unceasing watchfulness is a great help to prayer. It keeps the mind from drifting away from right principles. It shuts out that vanity and trifling which prevails in the world everywhere, and to an alarming extent among professed Christians. He whose mind loves to dwell upon God has a strong defense. He will be quick to perceive the dangers that threaten his spiritual life, and a sense of danger will lead him to call upon God for help and protection. [Cf: RH 10-11-81 para. 2] p. 238, Para. 3, [1881MS].

There are times when the Christian life seems beset by dangers, and duty seems hard to perform. But the clouds that gather about our way, and the perils that surround us, will never disappear before a halting, doubting, prayerless spirit. At such times unbelief says, We can never surmount these obstructions; let us wait until we can see our way clearly. But faith courageously urges an advance, hoping all things, believing all things. [Cf: RH 10-11-81 para. 3] p. 238, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Watchfulness and vigilance are needed now as never before in the history of the race. The eye must be turned off from beholding vanity. Lawlessness, the prevailing spirit of the age, must be met with a decided rebuke. Let none feel that they are in no danger. As long as Satan lives, his efforts will be constant and untiring to make the

world as wicked as before the flood, and as licentious as were the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. The prayer may well be offered daily by those who have the fear of God before them, that he will preserve their hearts from evil desires, and strengthen their souls to resist temptation. Those who in their self-confidence feel no need of watchfulness and unceasing prayer, are near some humiliating fall. All who do not feel the importance of resolutely guarding their affections, will be captivated by those who practice their arts to ensnare and lead astray the unwary. Men may have a knowledge of divine things, and an ability to fill an important place in the work of God; yet, unless they cherish a simple faith in their Redeemer, they will be ensnared and overcome by the enemy. [Cf: RH 10-11-81 para. 4] p. 239, Para. 1, [1881MS].

It is because the duties of watchfulness and prayer have been so sadly neglected that there is so great a lack of moral power. This is why so many who have a form of godliness bring forth no corresponding works. A careless indifference, a carnal security concerning religious duties and eternal things, prevails to an alarming extent. The word of God exhorts us to be found "praying always, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance;" and again, "Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." Here is the Christian's safeguard, his protection amid the perils that surround his pathway. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 10-11-81 para. 5] p. 239, Para. 2, [1881MS].

"Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." Heb. 12:1. [Cf: RH 10-18-81 para. 1] p. 239, Para. 3, [1881MS].

In this text one of the public games so famous in Paul's time is used to illustrate the Christian race. The competitors in the race submitted to a painful training process, practicing the most rigid self-denial that their physical powers might be in the most favorable condition, and then they taxed these powers to the utmost to win the honor of a perishable wreath. Some never recovered from the effects. In consequence of the terrible strain, men would sometimes fall by the racecourse, bleeding at the mouth and nose; others breathed out their life, firmly grasping the poor bauble that had cost them so dear. [Cf: RH 10-18-81 para. 2] p. 239, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Paul compares the followers of Christ to the competitors in a race. "Now," says the apostle, "they do it to obtain a *corruptible* crown; but we [mark the greater inducement] an *incorruptible*." Here Paul makes a sharp contrast, to put to shame the feeble efforts of professed Christians who plead for their selfish indulgences, and refuse to place themselves, by self-denial and strictly temperate habits, in a position that they will make a success of overcoming. All who entered the list in the public games were animated and excited by the hope of a prize if they were successful. In like manner a prize is held out before the Christian, the reward of faithfulness to the end of the race. If the prize is won, his future welfare is assured; an exceeding and eternal weight of glory is in reserve for the overcomer. Shall, then, the followers of Christ, with the attractions of the heavenly world before them, grudge the self-denial and spare the effort, needful to secure the imperishable crown? [Cf: RH 10-18-81 para. 3] p. 240, Para. 1, [1881MS].

"They do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we, an incorruptible." In the races, the crown of honor was placed in sight of the competitors, that if any were tempted for a moment to relax their efforts, the eye would rest on the prize, and they would be inspired with new vigor. So the heavenly goal is presented to the view of the Christian, that it may have its just influence, and inspire him with zeal and ardor. We may safely and earnestly look to this recompense of reward, that we may assure ourselves of its excellence, and have an ardent desire to secure its possession. [Cf: RH 10-18-81 para. 4] p. 240, Para. 2, [1881MS].

All ran in the race, but only one received the prize. The other strugglers for the perishable laurel wreath, however thorough their preparation, however earnest and determined their efforts, were doomed to failure. It is not so with the Christian race. None who are earnest and persevering will fail of success. The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. The weakest saint as well as the strongest may obtain the crown of immortal glory, if he is thoroughly in earnest, and will submit to privation and loss for Christ's sake. The apostle calls our attention to the care and diligence which were required to secure the victory in these ancient games. He exhorts all who start in the Christian race to give all diligence to make success certain, while he presents before them for their encouragement the crown of glory which the righteous Judge will award to all who are faithful to the end of the race. He says, "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air; but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." [Cf: RH 10-18-81 para. 5] p. 240, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Paul addresses the Hebrews in a similar style: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." [Cf: RH 10-18-81 para. 6] p. 240, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Here we are cited to the example of the multitude of faithful witnesses who would not sacrifice their faith and principle for the sake of enjoying ease and self-gratification, but who gave up all, not withholding their lives, for the truth of God. Their example should quicken our zeal and increase our faith. But Jesus is our perfect pattern; and when we look to him who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, we should be aroused to greater earnestness. He has led the way to the heavenly reward in glory. He passed through fiercer conflicts than man will ever be able to endure. [Cf: RH 10-18-81 para. 7] p. 241, Para. 1, [1881MS].

"If a man strive for the mastery, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully." A man may make earnest efforts to overcome, while he is not in possession of the physical, mental, and moral power which he might possess were he brought into harmony with the laws which govern his being. If through selfish indulgence he is an intemperate man,

every organ in his body becomes enfeebled, and he is robbed of mental and moral power. He is not striving lawfully. He is not laying aside every weight, and the sin which so easily besets. Every law governing the human system is to be strictly regarded; for it is as truly a law of God as is the word of Holy Writ; and every willful deviation from obedience to this law is as certainly sin as a violation of the moral law. All nature expresses the law of God, but in our physical structure Jehovah has written his law with his own finger upon every thrilling nerve, upon every living fiber, and upon every organ of the body. We shall suffer loss and defeat, if we step out of nature's path, which God himself has marked out, into one of our own devising. [Cf: RH 10-18-81 para. 8] p. 241, Para. 2, [1881MS].

We must strive lawfully, if we would win the boon of eternal life. The path is wide enough, and all who run the race may win the prize. If we create unnatural appetites, and indulge them in any degree, we violate nature's laws, and enfeebled physical, mental, and moral conditions will result. We are hence unfitted for that persevering, energetic, and hopeful effort which we might have made had we been true to nature's laws. If we injure a single organ of the body, we rob God of the service we might render to him. "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." [Cf: RH 10-18-81 para. 9] p. 241, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The apostle Paul compares himself to a man running in the ancient racecourse, and straining every nerve and muscle to win the prize. He did not consider his work ended while he could labor in the cause of God. He never felt that he had graduated in the school of Christ, but he ever realized the necessity of strictly guarding his appetites and passions, lest they should so strengthen themselves as to overcome spiritual zeal. He strove with all his powers against natural inclinations which called for unlawful indulgence. His own testimony was, "I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." It was only when he was on trial for his life, which depended on a word or a nod from the tyrant Nero, and he was aware that his end was nigh, that he broke forth in the lofty, elevated strains of triumphant assurance: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept my faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day." This crown is not a perishable chaplet of flowers, but the glorious crown of everlasting life, which awaits all who, having completed the Christian race, love the appearing of our Lord. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 10-18-81 para. 10] p. 241, Para. 4, [1881MS].

"Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you." [Cf: RH 10-25-81 para. 1] p. 242, Para. 1, [1881MS].

There is a work for each of us to do, an individual work, which one cannot do for another. A solemn responsibility rests upon us as Christians to let our light so shine before the world, that others, seeing our good works, may glorify our Father in Heaven. We cannot exert a right influence upon others, unless we walk in the light

ourselves. If we have experienced the pardoning grace of God, we should feel it a duty, as opportunity shall present, to speak in counsel and affectionate entreaty to those who are in danger of losing eternal life. [Cf: RH 10-25-81 para. 2] p. 242, Para. 2, [1881MS].

A life spent in active work for God is a blessed one. Multitudes who are wasting their time in trifles, in idle regrets, and in unprofitable murmurings, might have altogether a different experience, if they would appreciate the light God has given them, and let it shine upon others; and many make life miserable by their own selfishness and love of ease. By a diligent activity, their lives might become as bright rays of sunshine to guide those who are in the dark road to death into the pathway to Heaven. If they take this course, their own hearts will be filled with peace and joy in Jesus Christ. It is for our profit in this life, and for our eternal interest, that we manifest earnestness and zeal in the work of God. [Cf: RH 10-25-81 para. 3] p. 242, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Many say, "If I knew Jesus would come in five years, I would make it my first business to win souls to Christ; for this would be the all-important consideration." And these very persons may not live two years, or even one. We should first seek God, and his holiness. In his wise providence we are incapable of looking into the future, which often causes us disquietude and unhappiness. But one of the greatest evidences we have of the loving kindness of God is his concealment of the events of the morrow. Our ignorance of tomorrow makes us more vigilant and earnest today. We cannot see what is before us. Our best laid plans sometimes seem to be unwise and faulty. We think, "If we only knew the future!" but God would have his children trust in him, and be ready to go where he shall lead them. We know not the precise time when our Lord shall be revealed in the clouds of heaven, but he has told us that our only safety is in a constant readiness,--a position of watching and waiting. Whether we have one year before us, or five, or ten, we are to be faithful to our trust today. We are to perform each day's duties as faithfully as though that day were to be our last. [Cf: RH 10-25-81 para. 4] p. 242, Para. 4, [1881MS].

We are not doing the will of God if we wait in idleness. To every man he has given his work, and he expects each one to do his part with fidelity. We are to sow beside all waters, and to work continuously for Jesus, hoping for the salvation to be given us, and quietly waiting for our reward. Sinners are to be warned; sinners are to be won to Christ. [Cf: RH 10-25-81 para. 5] p. 243, Para. 1, [1881MS].

There are many men of excellent ability,--men ambitious in worldly pursuits,--for whose salvation no one believing in present truth is making any efforts, because they fear a repulse. But the skill and energy which make them successful in worldly pursuits, will, if consecrated, make them useful in the service of Christ. We cannot tell the ambitious man that he must cease to be ambitious if he would become a Christian. God places before him the highest objects of ambition,--a spotless white robe, a crown studded with jewels, a scepter, a throne of glory, and honor that is as enduring as the throne of Jehovah. All the elements of character which help to make him successful and honored in the world,--the irrepressible desire for some greater good, the indomitable will, the strenuous exertion, the untiring perseverance,--are not to be crushed out. These are to remain, and through the grace

of God received into the heart, to be turned into another channel. These valuable traits of character may be exercised on objects as much higher and noble than worldly pursuits as the heavens are higher than the earth. Jesus presents a white robe, a crown of glory richer than any that ever decked the brow of a monarch, and titles above those of honored princes. The recompense for a life devoted to the service of Christ exceeds anything that the human imagination can grasp. Christ does not call upon men to lay aside their zeal, their desires for excellence and elevation; but he would have them seek, not for perishable treasure or fleeting honor, but for that which is enduring. [Cf: RH 10-25-81 para. 6] p. 243, Para. 2, [1881MS].

God has no use for listless souls. Ministers sometimes tell the people that they have nothing to do but believe; that Jesus has done it all, and their own works are nothing. But the word of God plainly states that in the Judgment the scales will be balanced accurately, and the decisions will be based on the evidence adduced. One man becomes ruler of ten cities, another of five, another of two, each man receiving exactly in proportion to the improvement he has made on the talents intrusted to his keeping. Our efforts in works of righteousness, in our own behalf and for the salvation of souls, will have a decided influence on our recompense. [Cf: RH 10-25-81 para. 7] p. 243, Para. 3, [1881MS].

God is well pleased if those striving for eternal life aim high. There will be strong temptations to indulge the natural traits of character by becoming worldly-wise, scheming, and selfishly ambitious, gathering wealth to the neglect of the salvation which is of so much higher value. But every temptation resisted is a priceless victory gained in subduing self; it bends the powers to the service of Jesus, and increases faith, hope, patience, and forbearance. [Cf: RH 10-25-81 para. 8] p. 244, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The Christian must be upright while dwelling with the corrupt and with traitors. With a heart true to God, and imbued with his Spirit, he will see much to grieve over while surrounded by commandment breakers,-- those who are on the side of the great rebel, having thrown off their allegiance to the God of Heaven. The fact that iniquity abounds is a strong reason why he should be watchful, and diligent, and faithful in his Master's service, that he may rightly represent the religion of Jesus Christ. On all sides the Christian soldier will hear treasonable plottings and rebellious utterances from those who make void the law of God. This should increase his zeal to act as a faithful sentinel for God, and to use every effort to bring souls to enlist beneath the bloodstained banner of Prince Immanuel. The more dense the moral darkness, the more earnest should be the endeavor to walk with God, that light and power from him may be reflected upon those in darkness. The love of genuine Christians will not grow cold because iniquity abounds. As society grows more and more corrupt, as in the days of Noah and of Lot, there will be yearning of soul over deceived, deluded, perishing sinners, who are preparing themselves for a fate similar to that of the transgressors who perished in the waters of the flood and in the fires of Sodom. The true follower of Christ will not do as the wicked worldlings do, because it is fashionable to be sinful. His soul will be vexed and indignant at the bold insults offered to the world's Redeemer; and he will be anxious to exert every power to help press back the tide of wretchedness and guilt that is flooding the world.

[Cf: RH 10-25-81 para. 9] p. 244, Para. 2, [1881MS].

We have only a little while to urge the warfare; then Christ will come, and this scene of rebellion will close. Then our last efforts will have been made to work with Christ and advance his kingdom. Some who have stood in the forefront of the battle, zealously resisting incoming evil, fall at the post of duty; others gaze sorrowfully at the fallen heroes, but have no time to cease work. They must close up the ranks, seize the banner from the hand palsied by death, and with renewed energy vindicate the truth and the honor of Christ. As never before, resistance must be made against sin,--against the powers of darkness. The time demands energetic and determined activity on the part of those who believe present truth. They should teach the truth by both precept and example. If the time seems long to wait for our Deliverer to come, if, bowed by affliction and worn with toil, we feel impatient for our commission to close, and to receive an honorable release from the warfare, let us remember--and let the remembrance check every murmur--that God leaves us on earth to encounter storms and conflicts, to perfect Christian character, to become better acquainted with God our Father and Christ our elder Brother, and to do work for the Master in winning many souls to Christ, that with glad heart we may hear the words: "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." [Cf: RH 10-25-81 para. 10] p. 244, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Be patient, Christian soldier. Yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come. The night of weary waiting, and watching, and mourning is nearly over. The reward will soon be given; the eternal day will dawn. There is no time to sleep now,--no time to indulge in useless regrets. He who ventures to slumber now will miss precious opportunities of doing good. We are granted the blessed privilege of gathering sheaves in the great harvest; and every soul saved will be an additional star in the crown of Jesus, our adorable Redeemer. Who is eager to lay off the armor, when by pushing the battle a little longer he will achieve new victories and gather new trophies for eternity? [Cf: RH 10-25-81 para. 11] p. 245, Para. 1, [1881MS].

We must not become weary or faint-hearted. It would be a terrible loss to barter away enduring glory for ease, convenience, and enjoyment, or for carnal indulgences. A gift from the hand of God awaits the overcomer. Not one of us deserves it; it is gratuitous on his part. Wonderful and glorious will be this gift, but let us remember that "one star differeth from another star in glory." But as we are urged to strive for the mastery, let us aim, in the strength of Jesus, for the crown heavy with stars. "They that be wise shall shine as the firmament, and they that win many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 10-25-81 para. 12] p. 245, Para. 2, [1881MS].

August 22, in company with my daughters, Emma and Mary K. White, I left Battle Creek for the West, hoping to receive benefit from a change of climate. Though still suffering from the effects of a severe attack of malarial fever, as well as from the shock of my husband's death, I endured the journey better than I had expected. We reached Boulder, Colorado, on Thursday, Aug. 25, and on the following Sunday left that place by private carriage for our home in the mountains. [Cf: RH 11-01-81 para. 1] p. 245, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Here the clear, cool air, and the pure water, fresh from living springs, seemed to promise renewed health and vigor. But the altitude was too great, and in a short time I was again prostrated. It was nearly a week before my strength began slowly to return. The action of the heart seemed retarded, and breathing was difficult. Yet, suffering as I did from pain and weakness, I enjoyed the quiet solitude of the mountains. The solemn stillness reigning there seemed to accord with my feelings. [Cf: RH 11-01-81 para. 2] p. 245, Para. 4, [1881MS].

From our cottage I could look out upon a forest of young pines, so fresh and fragrant that the air was perfumed with their spicy odor. In former years, my husband and myself made this grove our sanctuary. Among these mountains we often bowed together in worship and supplication. All around me were the places which had been thus hallowed; and as I gazed upon them, I could recall many instances in which we there received direct and remarkable answers to prayer. Light from Heaven shone upon us, and we many times obtained clear indications of duty. The presence of Christ seemed to be with us, and his voice spoke to our hearts, "Peace be unto you." [Cf: RH 11-01-81 para. 3] p. 246, Para. 1, [1881MS].

With my husband I have stood on some lofty height, and looked upon the mountains rising peak above peak, until our souls were thrilled with a sense of God's majesty and power. At evening we delighted to look up to the blue heavens inlaid with glittering stars; and while thus beholding the splendors of the visible universe, we acknowledged with reverent awe that all was the handiwork of the Most High. We rejoiced that the God of creation is the God of the Bible, and that we can claim this infinite Being as our Father. We talked of the glories of his power and wisdom, and adored the matchless love which has made it possible, through Jesus Christ, for fallen man to become a son and heir of the Maker and Sovereign of the universe. [Cf: RH 11-01-81 para. 4] p. 246, Para. 2, [1881MS].

How near we seemed to God, as in the clear moonlight we bowed upon some lonely mountainside to ask for needed blessings at his hand! What faith and confidence were ours! God's purposes of love and mercy seemed more fully revealed, and we felt the assurance that our sins and errors were pardoned. Upon such occasions I have seen my husband's countenance lighted up with a radiance that seemed reflected from the throne of God, as in changed voice he praised the Lord for the rich blessings of his grace. Amid earth's gloom and darkness, we could still discern on every hand gleams of brightness from the Fount of light. Through the works of creation we communed with Him who inhabiteth eternity. As we looked upon the towering rocks, the lofty mountains, we exclaimed, Who is so great a God as our God? [Cf: RH 11-01-81 para. 5] p. 246, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Surrounded, as we often were, with difficulties, burdened with responsibilities, finite, weak, erring mortals at best, we were at times almost ready to yield to despair. But when we considered God's love and care for his creatures, as revealed both in the book of nature and on the pages of inspiration, our hearts were comforted and strengthened. Surrounded by the evidences of God's power, and overshadowed by his presence, we could not cherish distrust or unbelief. Oh, how often have peace, and hope, and even joy, come to us

in our experience amid these rocky solitudes! [Cf: RH 11-01-81 para. 6] p. 246, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Again I have been among the mountains, but alone. None to share my thoughts and feelings as I looked once more upon those grand and awful scenes! Alone, alone! God's dealings seem mysterious, his purposes unfathomable; yet I know that they must be just, and wise, and merciful. It is my privilege and my duty to wait patiently for him, the language of my heart at all times being, "He doeth all things well." [Cf: RH 11-01-81 para. 7] p. 246, Para. 5, [1881MS].

I had no strength now to climb the mountain steeps. If I desired to acknowledge God's mercies, I could not repair to the forest or the cliffs. If I would seek wisdom from above, I must make my room my sanctuary. But even here I have enjoyed sweet communion with God, and have received precious tokens of his abiding presence. [Cf: RH 11-01-81 para. 8] p. 247, Para. 1, [1881MS].

In my recent bereavement, I have had a near view of eternity. I have, as it were, been brought before the great white throne, and have seen my life as it will there appear. I can find nothing of which to boast, no merit that I can plead. "Unworthy, unworthy of the least of thy favors, O my God," is my cry. My only hope is in a crucified and risen Saviour. I claim the merits of the blood of Christ. Jesus will save to the uttermost all who put their trust in him. [Cf: RH 11-01-81 para. 9] p. 247, Para. 2, [1881MS].

It is sometimes hard for me to preserve a cheerful countenance when my heart is rent with anguish. But I would not permit my sorrow to cast a gloom upon all around me. Seasons of affliction and bereavement are often rendered more sorrowful and distressing than they should be, because it is customary to give ourselves up to mourning without restraint. By the help of Jesus, I determined to shun this evil; but my resolution has been severely tested. My husband's death was a heavy blow to me, more keenly felt because so sudden. As I saw the seal of death upon his countenance, my feelings were almost insupportable. I longed to cry out in my anguish. But I knew that this could not save the life of my loved one, and I felt that it would be unchristian to give myself up to sorrow. I sought help and comfort from above, and the promises of God were verified to me. The Lord's hand sustained me. It is a sin to indulge, without restraint, in mourning and lamentation. By the grace of Christ, we may be composed and even cheerful under sore trial. [Cf: RH 11-01-81 para. 10] p. 247, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Let us learn a lesson of courage and fortitude from the last interview of Christ with his apostles. They were about to be separated. Our Saviour was entering the bloodstained path which would lead him to Calvary. Never was [a] scene more trying than that through which he was soon to pass. The apostles had heard the words of Christ foretelling his sufferings and death, and their hearts were heavy with sorrow, their minds distracted with doubt and fear. Yet there were no loud outcries; there was no abandonment of grief. Those last solemn, momentous hours were spent by our Saviour in speaking words of comfort and assurance to his disciples, and then all united in a hymn of praise. [Cf: RH 11-01-81 para. 11] p. 247, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Instead of expressing the sadness of their hearts by the mournful

measure of some solemn lament, they sung, as was customary on that occasion, the joyful Hallel, which abounded in expressions of faith, of gratitude, and of lofty praise: "The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation. The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous. The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. The right hand of the Lord is exalted. The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord." What a prelude to the agony in Gethsemane, the abuse and mockery of the judgment hall, and the awful scenes of Calvary, were those last hours spent in chanting the praises of the Most High! [Cf: RH 11-01-81 para. 12] p. 248, Para. 1, [1881MS].

When Martin Luther received discouraging news, he would often say, "Come, let us sing the forty-sixth psalm." This psalm commences with the words, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." Instead of mourning, weeping, and despairing, when troubles gather about us like a flood and threaten to overwhelm us, if we would not only pray for help from God, but would praise him for so many blessings left,--praise him that he is able to help us,--our course would be more pleasing to him, and we would see more of his salvation. [Cf: RH 11-01-81 para. 13] p. 248, Para. 2, [1881MS].

When difficulties and trials surround us, we should flee to God, and confidently expect help from Him who is mighty to save and strong to deliver. We must ask for God's blessing if we would receive it. Prayer is a duty and a necessity; but do we not neglect praise? Should we not oftener render thanksgiving to the Giver of all our blessings? We need to cultivate gratitude. We should frequently contemplate and recount the mercies of God, and laud and glorify his holy name, even when we are passing through sorrow and affliction. [Cf: RH 11-01-81 para. 14] p. 248, Para. 3, [1881MS].

On approaching the chamber where a husband and father had just breathed his last, we would be filled with astonishment to hear, not the voice of mourning, the melancholy strains of some funeral chant, but a song of sacred praise, joyous and triumphant as the Passover Hallel. Surely, the widow and fatherless would be deemed lacking in affection for the departed. Yet how could these afflicted ones, who have lost their staff and counselor, and who must now lean more entirely upon God--how could they more surely brace their souls for danger and conflict than by calling to mind what their Heavenly Father has done for them, how he has proved himself a present help in time of trouble? [Cf: RH 11-01-81 para. 15] p. 248, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The Lord's merciful kindness is great toward us. He will never leave nor forsake those who trust in him. If we would think and talk less of our trials, and more of the mercy and goodness of God, we would find ourselves raised above much of our gloom and perplexity. My brethren and sisters, you who feel that you are entering upon a dark path, and like the captives in Babylon must hang your harps upon the willows, let us make trial of cheerful song. You may say, How can I sing, with this dark prospect before me, with this burden of sorrow and bereavement upon my soul? But have earthly sorrows deprived us of the all-powerful Friend we have in Jesus? Should not the marvelous love of God in the gift of his dear Son be a theme of continual rejoicing? When we bring

our petitions to the throne of grace, let us not forget to offer also anthems of thanksgiving. "Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth God." As long as our Saviour lives, we have cause for unceasing gratitude and praise. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 11-01-81 para. 16] p. 248, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Our Creator has bestowed his bounties upon man with a liberal hand. Were all these gifts of Providence wisely and temperately employed, poverty, sickness, and distress would be well-nigh banished from the earth. But alas, we see on every hand the blessings of God changed to a curse by the wickedness of men. There is no class guilty of greater perversion and abuse of his precious gifts than are those who employ the products of the soil in the manufacture of intoxicating liquors. The nutritive grains, the healthful, delicious fruits, are converted into beverages that pervert the senses and madden the brain. As a result of the use of these poisons, thousands of families are deprived of the comforts and even the necessaries of life, acts of violence and crime are multiplied, and disease and death hurry myriads of victims to a drunkard's grave. [Cf: RH 11-08-81 para. 1] p. 249, Para. 1, [1881MS].

This work of destruction is carried on under the protection of the laws of the land! For a paltry sum, men are licensed to deal out to their fellow men the potion that shall rob them of all that makes this life desirable and of all hope of the life to come. Neither the lawmaker nor the liquor seller is ignorant of the result of his work. At the hotel bar, in the beer garden, at the saloon, the slave of appetite expends his means for that which is destructive to reason, health, and happiness. The liquor seller fills his till with the money that should provide food and clothing for the family of the poor drunkard. [Cf: RH 11-08-81 para. 2] p. 249, Para. 2, [1881MS].

This is the worst kind of robbery. Yet men in high position in society and in the church lend their influence in favor of license laws! And why?--because they can obtain higher rent for their buildings by letting them to liquor dealers? because it is desirable to secure the political support of the liquor interest? because these professed Christians are themselves secretly indulging in the alluring poison? Surely, a noble, unselfish love for humanity would not authorize men to entice their fellow creatures to destruction. [Cf: RH 11-08-81 para. 3] p. 249, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The laws to license the sale of spirituous liquors have filled our towns and cities, yes, even our villages and secluded hamlets, with snares and pitfalls for the poor, weak slave of appetite. Those who seek to reform are daily surrounded with temptation. The drunkard's terrible thirst clamors for indulgence. On every side are the fountains of destruction. Alas, how often is his moral power overborne! how often are his convictions silenced! He drinks and falls. Then follow nights of debauchery, days of stupor, imbecility, and wretchedness. Thus, step by step, the work goes on, until the man who was once a good citizen, a kind husband and father, seems changed to a demon. [Cf: RH 11-08-81 para. 4] p. 249, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Suppose that those officials who at the beginning of 1881 granted license to liquor dealers, could on New Year's of 1882 behold a faithful picture of the results of the traffic carried on under that

license. It is spread out before them in its startling and frightful details, and they know that all is true to life. There are fathers, mothers, and children falling beneath the murderer's hand; there are the wretched victims of cold and hunger and of vile and loathsome disease, criminals immured in gloomy dungeons, victims of insanity tortured by visions of fiends and monsters. There are gray haired parents mourning for once noble, promising sons and lovely daughters, now gone down to an untimely grave. [Cf: RH 11-08-81 para. 5] p. 250, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Look upon the drunkard's home. Mark the squalid poverty, the wretchedness, the unutterable woe that are reigning there. See the once happy wife fleeing before her maniac husband. Hear her plead for mercy as the cruel blows fall on her shrinking form. Where are the sacred vows made at the marriage altar? where is the love to cherish, the strength to protect her now? Alas, these have been melted like precious pearls in the fiery liquid, the cup of abominations! Look upon those half-naked children. Once they were cherished tenderly. No wintry storm, nor the cold breath of the world's contempt and scorn, was permitted to approach them. A father's care, a mother's love, made their home a paradise. Now all is changed. Day by day the cries of agony wrenched from the lips of the drunkard's wife and children go up to Heaven. And all this that the liquor seller may add to his gains! And his hellish work is performed under the broad seal of the law! Thus society is corrupted, workhouses and prisons are crowded with paupers and criminals, and the gallows is supplied with victims. The evil ends not with the drunkard and his unhappy family. The burdens of taxation are increased, the morals of the young are imperiled, the property and even the life of every member of society is endangered. But the picture may be presented never so vividly, and yet it falls short of the reality. No human pen or pencil can fully delineate the horrors of intemperance. [Cf: RH 11-08-81 para. 6] p. 250, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Were the only evil arising from the sale of ardent spirits the cruelty and neglect manifested by intemperate parents toward their children, this alone should be enough to condemn and destroy the traffic. Not only does the drunkard render the life of his children miserable, but by his sinful example he leads them also into the path of crime. How can Christian men and women tolerate this evil? Should barbarous nations steal our children and abuse them as intemperate parents abuse their offspring, all Christendom would be aroused to put an end to the outrage. But in a land professedly governed by Christian principles, the suffering and sin entailed upon innocent and helpless childhood by the sale and use of intoxicating liquors are considered a necessary evil! [Cf: RH 11-08-81 para. 7] p. 250, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The word of God plainly declares, "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken." Would that all who support the liquor traffic could realize that if, understanding its evils, they continue to uphold it, the curse of God is upon them, that retributive justice will one day overtake them, and they will see and feel the results of their sinful course. [Cf: RH 11-08-81 para. 8] p. 251, Para. 1, [1881MS].

There is a cause for the moral paralysis upon society. Our laws sustain an evil which is sapping their very foundations. Many deplore the wrongs which they know exist, but consider themselves free from all

responsibility in the matter. This cannot be. Every individual exerts an influence in society. In our favored land, every voter has some voice in determining what laws shall control the nation. Should not that influence and that vote be cast on the side of temperance and virtue? [Cf: RH 11-08-81 para. 9] p. 251, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Many men are voted into office whose minds are deprived of their full vigor by indulgence in spirituous liquors, or constantly beclouded by the use of the narcotic tobacco. How often have the decisions made by courts of justice fastened suspicion upon those whose characters were untainted, wrenched hard earned means from the rightful owners, or perchance immured innocent men in prison cells. And all this because the mental and moral powers of judge, jurors, or witnesses, mayhap of all, were impaired by the use of narcotics or stimulants. Who can feel secure when so many whose duty it is to enact or execute the laws, pervert judgment under the influence of these poisons? The peace of happy families, reputation, property, liberty, and even life itself, are at the mercy of intemperate men in our legislative halls and our courts of justice. [Cf: RH 11-08-81 para. 10] p. 251, Para. 3, [1881MS].

By giving themselves up to the indulgence of appetite, many who were once upright, once beneficent, lose their integrity and their love for their fellow men, and unite with the dishonest and profligate, espouse their cause, and share their guilt. How many sacrifice reason, conscience, and the fear of God, to the love for strong drink. How many forfeit their prerogative as citizens of a republic,--bribed with a glass of whisky to cast their vote for some villainous candidate. As a class, the intemperate will not hesitate to employ deception, bribery, and even violence against those who refuse unbounded license to perverted appetite. [Cf: RH 11-08-81 para. 11] p. 251, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Satan exults as he sees the slaves of evil habit daily crowding under his black banner, going down to misery, death, and hell. We may call upon the friends of the temperance cause to rally to the conflict and seek to press back the tide of evil that is demoralizing the world; but of what avail are all our efforts while liquor selling is sustained by law? Must the curse of intemperance forever rest like a blight upon our land? Must it every year sweep like a devouring fire over thousands of happy homes? We talk of the results, tremble at the results, and wonder what we can do with the terrible results, while too often we tolerate and even sanction the cause. The advocates of temperance fail to do their whole duty unless they exert their influence by precept and example--by voice and pen and vote--in favor of prohibition and total abstinence. We need not expect that God will work a miracle to bring about this reform, and thus remove the necessity for our exertion. We ourselves must grapple with this giant foe, our motto no compromise and no cessation of our efforts till the victory is gained. [Cf: RH 11-08-81 para. 12] p. 251, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Our lawmakers have endeavored to restrict the evils of intemperance by licensing the sale of intoxicating liquors. The result of their efforts is before us. It is evident to every intelligent observer that inebriety with its train of crime and misery is steadily increasing. The victims of alcohol are more numerous today than at any former period. The politicians' plan of licensing "for the public good" has

proved itself a curse. [Cf: RH 11-08-81 para. 13] p. 252, Para. 1, [1881MS].

What can be done to press back the inflowing tide of evil? Let laws be enacted and rigidly enforced prohibiting the sale and the use of ardent spirits as a beverage. Let every effort be made to encourage the inebriate's return to temperance and virtue. But even more than this is needed to banish the curse of inebriety from our land. Let the appetite for intoxicating liquors be removed, and their use and sale is at an end. This work must to a great degree devolve upon parents. Let them, by observing strict temperance themselves, give the right stamp of character to their children, and then educate and train these children, in the fear of God, to habits of self-denial and self-control. Youth who have been thus trained will have moral stamina to resist temptation, and to control appetite and passion. They will stand unmoved by the folly and dissipation that are corrupting society. [Cf: RH 11-08-81 para. 14] p. 252, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The prosperity of a nation is dependent upon the virtue and intelligence of its citizens. To secure these blessings, habits of strict temperance are indispensable. The history of ancient kingdoms is replete with lessons of warning for us. Luxury, self-indulgence, and dissipation prepared the way for their downfall. It remains to be seen whether our own republic will be admonished by their example and avoid their fate. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 11-08-81 para. 15] p. 252, Para. 3, [1881MS].

"Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." [Cf: RH 11-29-81 para. 1] p. 252, Para. 4, [1881MS].

We profess to be pilgrims and strangers on earth, journeying to a better country, even an heavenly. If we are indeed but sojourners here, traveling to a land where none but the holy can dwell, we shall make it our first business to become acquainted with that country; we shall make diligent inquiry as to the preparation needed, the manners and character which we must have, in order to become citizens there. Jesus, the King of that land, is pure and holy. He has commanded his followers, "Be ye holy; for I am holy." If we are hereafter to associate with Christ and sinless angels, we must here obtain a fitness for such society. [Cf: RH 11-29-81 para. 2] p. 253, Para. 1, [1881MS].

This is our work,--our all-important work. Every other consideration is of minor consequence. Our conversation, our deportment, our every act, should be such as to convince our family, our neighbors, and the world, that we expect soon to remove to a better country. More than this, our godly example should keep ever before their minds the preparation needed by all who would enter that blessed home. Our acts must correspond with our faith, and faith will then be made perfect. We should not engage in the work of preparation merely as a duty, a necessity, but as a privilege which we are happy in accepting. Those whose faith is daily confirmed and strengthened by their works, will become acquainted with self-denial in restricting appetite, controlling ambitious desires, bringing every thought and feeling into harmony with the divine will. They will beware lest they be brought into the bondage

of sin by conforming to a worldly standard, and thus, before many witnesses, denying their faith. [Cf: RH 11-29-81 para. 3] p. 253, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The land to which we are traveling is in every sense far more attractive than was the land of Canaan to the children of Israel. They were led by the hand of God. Christ himself gave them a description of the country in which they were to find a home; for he wished to place before them every incentive to press on with hope and courage. They were brought where they could look over into the land of Canaan, and behold its pleasant landscapes, its wooded hills and fertile fields, and were permitted to eat of its rich fruit. But at the same time the difficulties to be encountered were not concealed from them. There was earnest effort before them if they possessed the land. They had need of courage and constant faith. If they would trust in God, his presence and power would be with them, and would at last bring them off victorious over all their enemies. But they become discouraged as the spies tell them of giants, warlike nations, and high walled cities, which they must encounter. They doubt, hesitate, and propose to go back to Egypt. By their unbelief they doom themselves to suffering, humiliation, and defeat, and at last die in the wilderness. [Cf: RH 11-29-81 para. 4] p. 253, Para. 3, [1881MS].

What stayed their progress just in sight of the goodly land? The difficulties before them were not so great as they had previously encountered. The great obstacle was in themselves. It was their own willful unbelief that turned them back. They were unwilling to risk anything upon the promises of God. The land was good; but the giants were mighty, and the walls of the cities high. They lost sight of the great advantages to be gained in possessing Canaan. They ceased conversing about the good land and its blessings, and permitted their minds to dwell upon the trials and difficulties lying between them and the desired haven. [Cf: RH 11-29-81 para. 5] p. 253, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The more they conversed upon these things, the greater the difficulties appeared, and the more determined their opinion that the conditions imposed upon them were such as they could not meet; that the Lord was unreasonable and severe with them. Satan presented matters before them in the worst light, and they felt that they were an abused people. They appealed to their own sympathies, and forgot the wondrous works of God in their behalf. They lost faith in God at the very time when it should have been strongest. When the Lord was about to manifest to them his great power and goodness, to make his name glorious in the earth, and exalt his people as a nation favored and honored of Heaven, they became discouraged. They knew that whenever they had trusted in God he had mightily wrought for them. Yet their unbelief strengthened into rebellion; their own perverse wills obstructed the way, making walls before them higher than had been built by their enemies. [Cf: RH 11-29-81 para. 6] p. 254, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The history of the children of Israel is written as a warning to us, "upon whom the ends of the world are come." We are standing, as it were, upon the very borders of the heavenly Canaan. We may, if we will, look over on the other side, and behold the attractions of the goodly land. If we have faith in the promises of God, we shall show in conversation and in deportment that we are not living for this world,

but are making it our first business to prepare for that holy land. [Cf: RH 11-29-81 para. 7] p. 254, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The dangers and difficulties before us are increasing as we near the heavenly rest. Satan is filled with deadly hatred against all who are seeking to gain the land which was once his home. His envy has lost none of its bitterness since he was excluded from the brightness and glory of Heaven. Before his fall an enemy to Christ, seeking to rob him of his honor and glory, he is no less his enemy now. He has determined to take the world captive. He sees that his time is short, that a mightier than he will soon take away his power, and he will make one last mighty effort against Christ and his church. [Cf: RH 11-29-81 para. 8] p. 254, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Now is the time for the friends of Jesus to be decided, faithful, and valiant for the Captain of their salvation. Now is the time to show who are the true Calebs, who will not deny that the walls are high, the giants mighty, but who believe that this very fact will make the victory more glorious. There are great difficulties and trials before us. It will require strong courage and persevering effort to go forward. But all now depends on our faith in the Captain who has led us safely thus far. Shall we let unbelief come in now? Shall we weakly yield to distrust and fear? Shall we compromise with the world, and turn away from the heavenly Canaan? Shall we make extensive plans for this life, as did the inhabitants of the old world, planting, building, marrying, and giving in marriage? [Cf: RH 11-29-81 para. 9] p. 254, Para. 4, [1881MS].

The solemn message for this time has a certain sound which we all should heed. The signs of the times tell us that the end of all things is at hand. Prophecies fulfilled have become facts of history, clearly defining our position. We are standing upon the verge of the eternal world. Because iniquity abounds, the love of many is waxing cold. Instead of this, love for God, love for purity, truth, and holiness, should be increasing in our hearts. The increase of wickedness around us should awaken in us more earnest zeal and stronger determination. The faith of God's true people, manifested, as was Noah's, by their works, should stand as a beacon of warning to the world. If our works do not correspond with our profession, we present to the world a false light, and thus lure them on to destruction. [Cf: RH 11-29-81 para. 10] p. 255, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Our Lord forewarned his people that iniquity would abound in the last days, and would have a paralyzing influence upon true godliness. Wickedness is seen and heard and felt all around us. It seems to permeate the very atmosphere, and affects the faith and love of God's professed people. It is difficult to hold fast Christian integrity. The fact is, much which is current in our day as Christianity is indebted for its very existence to the absence of persecution. When the test of fiery trial comes, a great proportion of these who profess the faith will show that their religion was hollow formalism. Instead of being strengthened and confirmed by opposition, their faith grows feeble and becomes extinct. [Cf: RH 11-29-81 para. 11] p. 255, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The days in which we live are days of peril. Carelessness, levity, love of pleasure and selfish gratification, are seen in the lives of very many professed Christians. Is this the time for Seventh-day

Adventists to lose their faith and grow cold and formal? God forbid! Shall we turn traitor at the very moment when God would be most glorified by our steadfast adherence to principle? Shall we turn from the heavenly attractions now, when we can almost see the glories on the other shore? We are living in the most important period of earth's history. By maintaining our allegiance to God, we may bear the noblest testimony for Christ and the truth. [Cf: RH 11-29-81 para. 12] p. 255, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The true Christian will cling to the promises of God more firmly now than ever before. His heart is where he has laid up his treasure--in Heaven. When right principles are despised and forsaken, then the true and loyal will show their warmest zeal and deepest love; then they will stand most firmly for truth, unpopular though it be. The true soldier will be ready to fight the battles of the Lord when his enemies appear strongest; and it is then that the victory will be most complete and triumphant. [Cf: RH 11-29-81 para. 13] p. 255, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Brethren and sisters of like precious faith, shall we give heed to the last warning message? Is this a time to use the Lord's money in ministering to our pride and ambition?--a time to add land to land, or to build grand houses for ourselves and our children?--a time to lay up our treasures and fix our affections here? The Lord is coming. In his great mercy he has delivered us from the darkness of error, and has permitted the bright beams of truth to shine into our souls. We should manifest our gratitude by so reflecting the light from Heaven, in our words and works, that others may be led to believe the truths we advocate. Let us beware that we be not swept away by the current of worldliness, thus saying to unbelievers, "The time is not. Be not alarmed. My Lord delayeth his coming." Let us be consistent; let our works correspond with our profession of faith. "The Lord is coming--let this be--The herald note of jubilee." By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 11-29-81 para. 14] p. 256, Para. 1, [1881MS].

"Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel, but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." [Cf: RH 12-06-81 para. 1] p. 256, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Human reasoning has ever sought to evade or set aside the simple, direct instructions of the word of God. In every age, a majority of the professed followers of Christ have disregarded those precepts which enjoin self-denial and humility, which require modesty and simplicity of conversation, deportment, and apparel. The result has ever been the same,--departure from the teachings of the gospel leads to the adoption of the fashions, customs, and principles of the world. Vital godliness gives place to a dead formalism. The presence and power of God, withdrawn from those world loving circles, are found with a class of humbler worshipers, who are willing to obey the teachings of the Sacred Word. Through successive generations, this course has been pursued. One after another, different denominations have risen, and, yielding their simplicity, have lost, in a great measure, their early power. [Cf: RH 12-06-81 para. 2] p. 256, Para. 3, [1881MS].

As we see the love of fashion and display among those who profess to believe present truth, we sadly ask, Will the people of God learn

nothing from the history of the past? There are few who understand their own hearts. The vain and trifling lovers of fashion may claim to be followers of Christ; but their dress and conversation show what occupies the mind and engages the affections. Their lives betray their friendship for the world, and it claims them as its own. [Cf: RH 12-06-81 para. 3] p. 256, Para. 4, [1881MS].

How can one that has ever tasted the love of Christ be satisfied with the frivolities of fashion? My heart is pained to see those who profess to be followers of the meek and lowly Saviour, so eagerly seeking to conform to the world's standard of dress. Notwithstanding their profession of godliness, they can hardly be distinguished from the unbeliever. They do not enjoy a religious life. Their time and means are devoted to the one object of dressing for display. [Cf: RH 12-06-81 para. 4] p. 256, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Pride and extravagance in dress is a sin to which woman is especially prone. Hence the injunction of the apostle relates directly to her: "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." [Cf: RH 12-06-81 para. 5] p. 257, Para. 1, [1881MS].

We see steadily gaining ground in the church an evil which the word of God condemns. What is the duty of those in authority, in regard to this matter? Will the influence of the church be what it should be, while many of its members obey the dictates of fashion, rather than the clearly expressed will of God? How can we expect the presence and aid of the Holy Spirit, while we suffer these things to exist among us? Can we remain silent while the teachings of Christ are set aside by his professed followers? These things bring grief and perplexity to those who have the oversight of the church of God. Will not my Christian sisters themselves reflect candidly and prayerfully upon this subject? Will they not seek to be guided by the word of God? The extra time spent in the making up of apparel according to the fashions of the world should be devoted to close searching of heart and the study of the Scriptures. The hours that are worse than wasted in preparing unnecessary adornings, might be made more valuable than gold if spent in seeking to acquire right principles and solid attainments. My heart aches as I see young ladies professing to be followers of Christ who are practically ignorant of his character and his will. These youth have been satisfied to feed on husks. The glittering tinsel of the world appears more valuable to them than the eternal riches. The mental powers, that might be developed by thought and study, are suffered to lie dormant, and the affections are undisciplined, because the outward apparel is considered of more consequence than spiritual loveliness or mental vigor. [Cf: RH 12-06-81 para. 6] p. 257, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Will the followers of Christ seek to obtain the inward adorning, the meek and quiet spirit which God pronounces of great price, or will they squander the few short hours of probation in needless labor for display? The Lord would have women seek constantly to improve both in mind and heart, gaining intellectual and moral strength that she may lead a useful and happy life,--a blessing to the world and an honor to her Creator. [Cf: RH 12-06-81 para. 7] p. 257, Para. 3, [1881MS].

I would ask the youth of today who profess to believe present truth,

wherein they deny self for the truth's sake. When they really desire an article of dress, or some ornament or convenience, do they lay the matter before the Lord in prayer to know if his Spirit would sanction this expenditure of means? In the preparation of their clothing, are they careful not to dishonor their profession of faith? Can they seek the Lord's blessing upon the time thus employed? It is one thing to join the church, and quite another thing to be united to Christ. Unconsecrated, world loving professors of religion are one of the most serious causes of weakness in the church of Christ. [Cf: RH 12-06-81 para. 8] p. 257, Para. 4, [1881MS].

In this age of the world, there is an unprecedented rage for pleasure. Dissipation and reckless extravagance everywhere prevail. The multitudes are eager for amusement. The mind becomes trifling and frivolous, because it is not accustomed to meditation, or disciplined to study. Ignorant sentimentalism is current. God requires that every soul shall be cultivated, refined, elevated, and ennobled. But too often every valuable attainment is neglected for fashionable display and superficial pleasure. Women permit their souls to be starved and dwarfed by fashion, and thus they become a curse to society, rather than a blessing. [Cf: RH 12-06-81 para. 9] p. 258, Para. 1, [1881MS].

I have seen poor families struggling under a weight of debt, and yet the children were not trained to deny themselves to remove this burden. They had never learned to practice self-denial in order to aid their parents. In one family where I visited, the daughters expressed a desire for an expensive piano. Gladly would the parents have gratified this wish, but they were embarrassed with debt. The daughters knew this, and had they been taught to practice self-denial, they would not have given their parents the pain of denying their wishes. But although told that it would be impossible, they did not permit the matter to end there. The desire was expressed again and again, thus continually adding to the heavy burden of the parents. On another visit I saw the coveted instrument of music in the house, and some hundreds of dollars were added to the burden of debt. I hardly knew whom to blame most, the indulgent parents or the selfish children. Both are guilty before God. [Cf: RH 12-06-81 para. 10] p. 258, Para. 2, [1881MS].

This one case will illustrate many. These young persons, although they profess to be Christians, have never taken the cross of Christ; for the very first lesson to be learned is the lesson of self-denial. Said our Saviour, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow me." In no way can we become disciples of Christ, except by complying with this condition. [Cf: RH 12-06-81 para. 11] p. 258, Para. 3, [1881MS].

We must know more of Jesus and his love than of the fashions of the world. In the name of my Master, I call upon the youth to study the example of Christ. When you wish to make an article, you carefully study the pattern, that you may reproduce it as nearly as possible. Now set to work to copy the Divine Exemplar. Your eternal interest demands that you possess the Spirit of Christ. You cannot be like Jesus, and cherish pride in your heart. You cannot give any place to envy or jealousy. You must consider it beneath the character of a Christian to harbor resentful thoughts or indulge in recrimination. Let the law of kindness be sacredly observed. Never comment upon the character or the acts of others in a manner to injure them. In no case make their

failures or defects the subject of ridicule or unkind criticism. You lessen your own influence by so doing, and lead others to doubt your sincerity as a Christian. Let peace and love dwell in your soul, and ever cherish a forgiving spirit. [Cf: RH 12-06-81 para. 12] p. 258, Para. 4, [1881MS].

I repeat, Study the fashions less, and the character of Jesus more. The greatest and holiest of men was also the meekest. In his character, majesty and humility were blended. You will find this to exist today in the greatest minds. The Majesty of Heaven came to earth, veiling his divinity with humanity. He had the command of worlds, he could summon the hosts of Heaven at his will; yet he for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. The attractions of this world, its glory and its pride, had no fascination for him. Meekness and humility he makes prominent in the cluster of Christian graces. He would have his disciples study these divine attributes, and seek to possess them. "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." [Cf: RH 12-06-81 para. 13] p. 259, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Of how little value are gold or pearls or costly array, in comparison with the meekness and loveliness of Christ. Natural loveliness consists in symmetry, or the harmonious proportion of parts, each with the other; but spiritual loveliness consists in the harmony or likeness of our souls to Jesus. This will make its possessor more precious than fine gold, even the golden wedge of Ophir. The grace of Christ is indeed a priceless adornment. It elevates and ennobles its possessor, and reflects beams of glory upon others, attracting them also to the Source of light and blessing. [Cf: RH 12-06-81 para. 14] p. 259, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Said the apostle Paul, "Our conversation is in Heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour." While others are dwarfing the intellect, hardening the heart, and robbing their Maker by devoting themselves to the service of the world, the true Christian is lifting his soul above the follies and vanities of earth, seeking God for pardon, peace, and righteousness; for glory, immortality, and eternal life. And he seeks not in vain. His fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ. Through this close intercourse with God, the soul becomes transformed. By beholding we are changed into the divine image, while those who seek only to gratify the desires of the unconsecrated heart, will float with the current of worldliness and fashion. They talk of what they love the most, give study and thought to that, until by beholding they are changed to the same image. Their conformity to worldly customs holds them in captivity to Satan, the god of this world. "His servants ye are to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey." [Cf: RH 12-06-81 para. 15] p. 259, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The dress worn by many of our sisters testifies against them,-- professors in name, but lovers of the world by practice. We propose that the means which is needlessly expended in dress and display, be made to flow in a different channel. Let all that has heretofore been expended to obliterate the line of demarkation between Christians and the world be now used to provide food and clothing for the Lord's poor, and to send the truth to those who are in darkness. Means are needed for the various enterprises connected with the work of God. Our sisters can do much to supply this want. If saved with care, the means that has

been worse than wasted in the indulgence of pride, will amount to more than they imagine. My sisters, dress as Christians should dress,-- simply, plainly; adorn yourselves as becometh women professing godliness, with good works. Let your tea and coffee money flow into the Lord's treasury. Let the means expended for every other hurtful indulgence of appetite also be placed there. You can do much for the cause of God by practicing self-denial in what seems to you little things. God will bless you in this work. [Cf: RH 12-06-81 para. 16] p. 259, Para. 4, [1881MS].

We have each an individual responsibility. No friend or neighbor can be a criterion for us. Jesus is the only safe pattern. Have you not, my sisters, given to the world a wrong example in your dress and in your selfish indulgence? Will you not have to render an account to God for the influence you have exerted in favor of needless adornment and display? Our faith must be tested in this world. Christ overcame in our behalf, and thus made it possible for us also to overcome. We must endure trial and temptation here, and then, if faithful, we shall receive the crown. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive a crown of life." We shall be exposed to manifold temptations, but these, if rightly borne, will refine and purify us, even as gold is purified in the fire. Yet when exposed to the allurements of the world, that which we had thought to be gold, proves to be but dross. Our Redeemer sees the situation, and he counsels all to buy of him gold tried in the fire; which is true faith and genuine love, the grace that will not be destroyed by fierce temptations. [Cf: RH 12-06-81 para. 17] p. 260, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The apostle exhorts Christians, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." Compare your character with the mirror of God's word, see if that law condemns you. If so, wash your robe of character in the blood of the Lamb. Whether we do or do not try ourselves by God's law, we may be sure that he will try us. He will bring us through the furnace. Trials do not come upon us to inform God of what we are, for his eye reads the intents and purposes of the heart; but it is for our own enlightenment, that we may learn our own defects, and remedy them before it is too late. We cannot tell what we are, whether our graces are true or false, until brought to the test. [Cf: RH 12-06-81 para. 18] p. 260, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The life of Christ was one continuous experience of privation, self-denial, and sorrow. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Seeing that our Saviour has endured all this for us, what will we endure for him? Will we show our love and gratitude by self-denial in obeying his words, and manifesting his spirit? There is work to be done for the Master. How many souls might be saved, if each professed follower of Christ would do all that lay in his power to do! My brother, my sister, there are all around us the poor, who may receive from you the words of Christ, after you have fed and clothed them. There are the sick, whom it is your duty to visit. There are sorrowing ones to be comforted and prayed for. If the Lord has blessed you with this world's goods, it is not that you may greedily hoard it, or expend it in the indulgence of pride. Remember that he will one day say, "Give an account of thy stewardship." Let us invest our means in the bank of Heaven by using it to supply the wants of the needy or to advance the cause of God. Then the Master at his

coming, having found us faithful over a few things, will make us each ruler over "many things" in the kingdom of glory. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 12-06-81 para. 19] p. 260, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The book of Genesis gives quite a definite account of social and individual life during the first twenty-five hundred years of man's history, and yet we have no account of an infant born blind, deaf, crippled, deformed, or imbecile. There is not an instance upon record in that book, of a natural death in infancy, childhood, or early manhood. There is no account of men and women dying of disease. Obituary notices in the book of Genesis run thus: "And all the days of Adam were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died." "And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years, and he died." Concerning others, the record states, "He lived to a good old age, and he died." It was so rare for a son to die before the father that such an occurrence was considered worthy of record. "And Haran died before his father Terah." Yet Haran himself was a father before his death. [Cf: RH 12-13-81 para. 1] p. 261, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The violation of physical law, and human suffering as the consequence, has so long prevailed, that many look upon the present state of sickness, suffering, debility, and premature death, as the appointed lot of humanity. But God did not create the race in its present feeble condition. This is not the work of Providence, but the work of man. It was brought about by violation of the laws of God. Through the temptation of appetite, Adam and Eve first fell from their holy and happy estate. Through the same temptation have the race become enfeebled. They have permitted appetite and passion to take the throne, and to bring into subjection reason and conscience. [Cf: RH 12-13-81 para. 2] p. 261, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Man came from the hand of his Creator perfect in organization, and beautiful in form. The fact that he has for six thousand years withstood the ever-increasing weight of disease and crime, is conclusive proof of the power of endurance with which he was first endowed. And although the antediluvians generally gave themselves up to sin without restraint, it was more than two thousand years before the violation of natural law was sensibly felt. Had Adam originally possessed no greater physical power than men now have, the race would ere this have become extinct. [Cf: RH 12-13-81 para. 3] p. 261, Para. 3, [1881MS].

With few exceptions, the patriarchs from Adam to Noah lived nearly a thousand years. Upon succeeding generations the burden of disease and suffering continued to rest more heavily, and the length of life greatly diminished. So rapidly had the race degenerated at the time of Christ's first advent, that from every town, city, and village, the sick were brought to him to be healed. Since that time, physical deterioration has steadily progressed. And because of the continued violation of the laws of life, the years of man have been shortened, so that the present generation are passing off to the grave at an earlier age than that at which the antediluvians came upon the stage of active life. [Cf: RH 12-13-81 para. 4] p. 262, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Not only has disease been transmitted from generation to generation, but parents bequeath to their children their own wrong habits, their perverted appetites, and corrupt passions. Men are slow to learn wisdom

from the history of the past. The strange absence of principle that characterizes the present generation, the disregard of the laws of life and health, is astonishing. Although a knowledge of these things can be readily obtained, a deplorable ignorance prevails. With the majority, the principal anxiety is, "What shall I eat? what shall I drink? and wherewithal shall I be clothed?" Notwithstanding all that has been said and written upon the importance of health and the means to preserve it, appetite is the great law which governs men and women generally. [Cf: RH 12-13-81 para. 5] p. 262, Para. 2, [1881MS].

What can be done to stay the tide of disease and crime that is sweeping our race down to ruin and to death? As the great cause of the evil is to be found in the indulgence of appetite and passion, so the first and great work of reform must be to learn and practice the lessons of temperance and self-control. To effect a permanent change for the better in society, the education of the masses must begin in early life. The habits formed in childhood and youth, the tastes acquired, the self-control gained, the principles inculcated from the cradle, are almost certain to determine the future of the man or woman. The crime and corruption occasioned by intemperance and lax morals might be prevented by the proper training of the youth. [Cf: RH 12-13-81 para. 6] p. 262, Para. 3, [1881MS].

One of the greatest aids in perfecting pure and noble characters in the young, strengthening them to control appetite and refrain from debasing excesses, is sound physical health. And, on the other hand, these very habits of self-control are essential to the maintenance of health. [Cf: RH 12-13-81 para. 7] p. 262, Para. 4, [1881MS].

It is of the highest importance that men and women be instructed in the science of human life, and the best means of preserving and acquiring health. Especially is youth the time to lay up a stock of knowledge to be put in daily practice through life. Youth is the time to establish good habits, to correct wrong ones already contracted, to gain and to hold the power of self-control, and to lay the plan, and accustom one's self to the practice, of ordering all the acts of life with reference to the will of God and the welfare of our fellow creatures. Youth is the sowing time, that determines the harvest both of this life and the life beyond the grave. [Cf: RH 12-13-81 para. 8] p. 262, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The youth of our time should be patiently instructed by both parents and teachers in the laws of health, and the means provided for its restoration when once impaired. Jesus did not ignore the claims of the body. He had respect for the physical condition of man, and went about healing the sick and restoring their faculties to those suffering from their loss. How incumbent, then, is it upon us to preserve the natural health with which God has endowed us, and to avoid dwarfing or weakening our powers. [Cf: RH 12-13-81 para. 9] p. 263, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Parents should impress upon their children the fact that all their powers are from God; that he has claims upon every faculty; that in sinning against their bodies, by abusing health in any manner, they sin against God, and slight one of his choicest blessings. God gives us health to use in his service; and the greater physical strength we possess, and the stronger our powers of endurance, the more we should

do for the Master. Instead of abusing and overtaxing our strength, we should sacredly preserve it for his use. [Cf: RH 12-13-81 para. 10] p. 263, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The young should be shown that they are not at liberty to do as they please with their lives. Now is their day of trust, and by and by will come their day of reckoning. God will not hold them guiltless for treating lightly his precious gifts; the world's Redeemer has paid an infinite price for them, and their lives and talents belong to him; and they will finally be judged according to the faithful or unfaithful stewardship of the capital which God has intrusted to their care. They should be taught that the greater their endowment of means and opportunities, the more heavily does the responsibility of God's work rest upon them, and the more are they required to do. If the youth are thus brought up to feel their responsibility to their Creator, and the important trust given them in their own lives, they will hesitate to plunge into the vortex of dissipation and crime that swallows up so many of the promising young men of our age. [Cf: RH 12-13-81 para. 11] p. 263, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Parents, let the work of reform begin at home; train up the child to habits of industry, and serious reflection; present life to him as a grave reality; show him his duty to his God, his neighbor, and himself; inculcate moral and religious principles; give him a suitable education, the means of earning an honest living; let him know you are ever ready to give him tender sympathy and sound advice, to help him if he stumbles, and to encourage him onward; and he will not be likely to go far astray, or miss of being a blessing to the world. [Cf: RH 12-13-81 para. 12] p. 263, Para. 4, [1881MS].

In conclusion, let all, both old and young, give diligent heed to the words of the Lord penned by the wise man three thousand years ago: "My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments. For length of days, and long life, and peace shall they add to thee. Let not mercy and truth forsake thee. Bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart. So shalt thou find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man." By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 12-13-81 para. 13] p. 264, Para. 1, [1881MS].

"Ye shall be witnesses unto me," were the parting words of our Saviour to his disciples, ere the cloud received him from their sight. In his absence, they were to be his representatives in the world. How faithfully they fulfilled their high commission, is testified by their life of self-denial for their Master's cause; by their joyful, triumphant witness for Christ and the truth in the face of torture, imprisonment, and death. [Cf: RH 12-20-81 para. 1] p. 264, Para. 2, [1881MS].

These words of Jesus have lost none of their force through the lapse of ages. Our Saviour calls for faithful witnesses in these days of hypocrisy and religious formalism. But how few, even among the professed ambassadors for Christ, are ready to give a faithful, personal testimony for their Master. Many can tell what the great and good men of generations past have done, and dared, and suffered, and enjoyed. They become eloquent in setting forth the power of the gospel which has enabled others to rejoice in trying conflicts, and to stand firm against fierce temptations. But while so earnest in bringing

forward other Christians as witnesses for Jesus, they seem to have no fresh, timely experience of their own to relate. [Cf: RH 12-20-81 para. 2] p. 264, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Ministers of Christ, what have you to say for yourselves? What soul conflicts have you experienced that have been for your good, for the good of souls, and for the glory of God? You who profess to be proclaiming the last solemn message to the world, what is your experience in the knowledge of the truth and its effect upon your own hearts? Will your character testify for Christ? Can you speak of the refining, ennobling, sanctifying influence of the truth as it is in Jesus? What have you seen, and what have you known, of the power of Christ? [Cf: RH 12-20-81 para. 3] p. 264, Para. 4, [1881MS].

This is the kind of witness for which the Lord calls, and for which churches are suffering. The spirit of Christ--true faith, that works by love and purifies the heart--is a priceless jewel, rare indeed in this degenerate age. "If ye love me," says the Saviour, "keep my commandments." Do we obey the law of God, or are we cherishing idols in our hearts? How many manifest their love by willing obedience, making the service of Christ their first consideration, and worldly things secondary? [Cf: RH 12-20-81 para. 4] p. 264, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Unbelievers sometimes look upon our faith as unattractive, cold, and forbidding. There is reason for this. Ministers of the gospel present to the people the theory of truth, while He who is the Truth and the Life is left in the background. Some preachers are more zealous to make a good argument upon doctrinal points, than to present a self-denying, crucified Saviour to the people. [Cf: RH 12-20-81 para. 5] p. 264, Para. 6, [1881MS].

A minister may gain a reputation for ability and shrewdness, and yet not be the acknowledged witness of Christ. He may talk of the truth, and boast of the truth, while yet his heart has not felt its sanctifying power. Self is exalted, and the glory of God forgotten. If true piety and the influence of the Holy Spirit are wanting, a minister's labors will be an injury to the people and to the cause of truth. He does not preach Christ from an experimental knowledge of him, but, parrot like, he repeats what he has learned from others. The Lord addresses to this class the question, "What hast thou to do to declare my statutes?" [Cf: RH 12-20-81 para. 6] p. 265, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Lift up Jesus,--lift him up before the people; dwell upon his matchless love. But the heart must first be imbued with that love, in order to speak it, to preach it, to pray it, to live it. We must have personal communion with Christ, in order to reveal him to the people. The graces of his Spirit, the loveliness of his character, must be shining forth in the characters of his witnesses. [Cf: RH 12-20-81 para. 7] p. 265, Para. 2, [1881MS].

How many cling with tenacious grasp to their self termed dignity, which is only self-esteem. These seek to honor themselves, instead of waiting in humbleness of heart for Christ to honor them. In conversation, more time is spent in talking of self than in exalting the riches of the grace of Christ. These persons teach others just how to perfect a Christian character, but they do not these things themselves. They have not learned of Him who says, "I am meek and lowly

of heart." [Cf: RH 12-20-81 para. 8] p. 265, Para. 3, [1881MS].

True holiness and humility are inseparable. The nearer the soul comes to God, the more completely is it humbled and subdued. When Job heard the voice of the Lord out of the whirlwind, he exclaimed, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." It was when Isaiah saw the glory of the Lord and heard the cherubim crying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts," that he cried out, "Woe is me, for I am undone!" Daniel, when visited by the holy messenger, says, "My comeliness was turned in me to corruption." Paul, after he was caught up into the third Heaven and heard things that it was not lawful for a man to utter, speaks of himself as "less than the least of all saints." It was the beloved John, that leaned on Jesus' breast, and beheld his glory, who fell as one dead before the angel. The more closely and continuously we behold our Saviour, the less shall we see to approve in ourselves. [Cf: RH 12-20-81 para. 9] p. 265, Para. 4, [1881MS].

There is a feverish love of pleasure at this time, a fearful increase of licentiousness, a contempt for all authority. Not only worldlings, but professed Christians also, are governed by inclination rather than duty. The words of Christ are sounding down through the ages, "Watch and pray." Says Paul, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." The signs of the times are pointing us to the near approach of our Lord. Is it indeed true that the end of this world's history is near? that Christ is at the door? Are we preparing for the great judgment scene? [Cf: RH 12-20-81 para. 10] p. 265, Para. 5, [1881MS].

Where are our responsible men at this crisis? Are they living like men who wait for their Lord? Are there not men in the ministry who are indifferent and careless? Are there any among us who are eating and drinking with the drunken? Inebriates are not the special ones here meant; all are included whose senses are so confused and benumbed by the spirit of the times that eternal things are not realized. If there was ever a time when men of God should stand aloof from the corruptions of the world, it is now. The Lord is at hand. Let the trumpet have a certain sound. Let the people be warned. [Cf: RH 12-20-81 para. 11] p. 266, Para. 1, [1881MS].

"Ye are my witnesses," saith the Lord. A living Christian will have a living testimony to bear. If you have been following Jesus step by step, you will have something right to the point to relate of the way he has led you. You can tell how you tested his promise, and found the promise true. You can point to the living spots in your experience, without going back for years into the past. Would that we could oftener hear the simple, earnest testimony of heart conflicts and victories!-- [Cf: RH 12-20-81 para. 12] p. 266, Para. 2, [1881MS].

"I have been fighting the battles of the Lord, and have made conquests over self. I was sorely assaulted by the great adversary, tempted to neglect prayer, and to seek my own pleasure. I did not faithfully discharge my duty to God. He has bestowed upon me Heaven's richest blessing, in the gift of his Son; yet I made his service secondary to my own. But I have seen my sin in so doing, and have repented before the Lord. I have battled against self, which was striving for the mastery. The conflict was grievous, but I would not yield to the

clamors of the carnal heart. I humbled my soul before God, and wept in penitence before him. My trembling faith grasped the promises, and appropriated them to myself. Jesus revealed himself as a present help in my emergency. I have gained the victory." What a blessed, softening, subduing influence such testimonies would have upon the hard heart of the unconverted or the backslider. God is speaking through clay. Religion seems a reality. [Cf: RH 12-20-81 para. 13] p. 266, Para. 3, [1881MS].

At this time of general intemperance and worldliness, every true Christian will have a battle to fight to practice the principles of truth as well as to assent to them. It is genuine, personal experience in the Christian life, the Christian warfare, that ministers of the gospel need. The Captain of our salvation calls for witnesses fresh from the field of action. Those who have been fiercely assaulted by the enemies of truth and the adversary of souls, and who have conducted themselves as did Jesus in his hour of trial, will have a testimony to bear which will thrill the hearts of the hearers. They will indeed be witnesses for Jesus. [Cf: RH 12-20-81 para. 14] p. 266, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Brethren, the biographies of good men of the past will not meet the demand for this time. The Saviour whom you profess to love and serve, wants you to have an experience of your own to relate. What do you believe? Is probation soon to close? Is the time at hand when the Judgment shall sit, and the books shall be opened, and we be judged according to our works? [Cf: RH 12-20-81 para. 15] p. 267, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Witnesses for Christ will manifest piety at home. Those who fail to do this are denying their faith. Ministers who preach close, practical discourses to the people, should themselves give a practical illustration of the truths taught. Piety in the daily life will give power to the public testimony. Patience, forbearance, and love will make an impression upon hearts that sermons have failed to reach. Christ is not pleased with the fruit that many bear. He pronounces the tree corrupt, for its character is determined by the fruit. [Cf: RH 12-20-81 para. 16] p. 267, Para. 2, [1881MS].

There is a sad lack of tenderness and sympathy among the servants of Christ. They do not love as brethren. They are harsh and dictatorial. Especially is their conduct toward the erring destitute of pity or compassion. Said the apostle, "Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." We shall surely be judged by our Heavenly Father in the same manner that we have judged others. "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." "He shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy." Oh that these hardhearted, exacting ones would fall upon the Rock and be broken, lest theirs be the terrible alternative, that the Rock shall fall upon them and grind them to powder. [Cf: RH 12-20-81 para. 17] p. 267, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Jesus has given us in his life an example of pity and love for the erring. While he fearlessly reprovved sin, he regarded the sinner with compassion. Looking upon the cross of Calvary, where Christ poured out his life to atone for our sins, let us recall his words, "Love one another, as I have loved you." Oh that we all, both ministers and people, might heed the tender entreaty! [Cf: RH 12-20-81 para. 18] p.

267, Para. 4, [1881MS].

But while the servant of Christ should seek with all patience and love to save sinners, he should on no account give license to sin. He must not allow his perceptions to be dulled by contact with iniquity, or his judgment to be perverted by the world's opinion. By excusing and palliating sin, we lose a sense of its heinous character. Compassion for the erring should not degenerate into indulgence for transgression. In order to preserve the safe mean, the Christian must add to patience godliness. Then he will see as God sees. [Cf: RH 12-20-81 para. 19] p. 267, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The Good Shepherd laid down his life for the sheep. Under-shepherds should watch for souls as they that must give account, remembering that they are to be "ensamples to the flock." He who takes upon himself the responsibility of instructing others in the things of God, should himself be a constant learner in the school of Christ. God will accept the labors of all who obey the Saviour's call, "Follow me." As they continue to follow Jesus, they will become more like him in character. Love to God and man will pervade the life. The thoughts will linger naturally upon heavenly things. The theme of conversation will be the subject of greatest interest, the Christian's hope. The very countenance will express the peace which passeth knowledge. Such a life is the best testimony that can be borne for Christ. By Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: RH 12-20-81 para. 20] p. 267, Para. 6, [1881MS].

This beautiful morning of January 1, 1881, I greet the children and youth of the Instructor with a Happy New Year. The old year, 1880, with its burden of records, has passed out, and the new year, with its prospects, hopes, and labors, has come. [Cf: The Youth's Instructor 01-05-81 para. 01] p. 268, Para. 1, [1881MS].

My dear youthful readers, will you not pause, while standing upon the very threshold of 1881, and inquire of your own hearts what has been the character of the life record that has passed up to Heaven for you? The past year's record, be it good or evil, cannot be changed. If you feel that your past life has been almost a failure, how much reason have you for gratitude to God that your probation did not close with the old year! [Cf: The Youth's Instructor 01-05-81 para. 02] p. 268, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Another year now opens its fair unwritten pages before you. The recording angel stands ready to write. Your course of action will determine what shall be traced by him. You may make your future life good or evil; and this will determine for you whether the year upon which you have just entered will be to you a Happy New Year. It is in your power to make it such for yourself and for those around you. If you connect with God, you may make bright sunshine in the family circle by thoughtfulness of others' comfort, putting away all discontent, and being cheerful, courteous, and obedient, or you may pursue a course that will bring a dark shadow upon the hearts of those who have ever loved you, watched over you, and cared for you from your earliest infancy. [Cf: The Youth's Instructor 01-05-81 para. 03] p. 268, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Will the youth who read the Instructor ask themselves the question whether they are a blessing to their parents, or a source of anxiety

and a curse? It would be a great satisfaction to them to know that you are trying to be dutiful and kind; but nothing can give them so much real happiness, this new year, as the knowledge that you have made Jesus a gift of yourselves, and that your daily prayer is, "My Father, be thou the guide of my youth." Begin the new year, then, by giving yourselves to God, if you have not already done so; and every day you spend in his service will bring blessings to you and all connected with you. [Cf: The Youth's Instructor 01-05-81 para. 04] p. 268, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Angels of God are waiting to show you the path of life; friends are seeking to draw you from the path of selfish pleasure and sin; you may be even now standing upon the dividing line; oh, pause and think! on the one side is life; on the other, death. [Cf: The Youth's Instructor 01-05-81 para. 05] p. 268, Para. 5, [1881MS].

I once read of an "old man who stood upon the border of the closing year, and looked forth from his window upon the blue heavens bright with stars, and upon the cold earth white with snow, and he thought no heart could be so hopeless and joyless as his. He saw the open grave before him, and behind him the sins and sorrows of a wasted life. He had followed the path of his own choosing for happiness, and he found it not. He was wasted in body, and his soul was filled with remorse. [Cf: The Youth's Instructor 01-05-81 para. 06] p. 269, Para. 1, [1881MS].

"The days of his youth came back to his memory like reproachful specters, and he saw himself again at the point where two paths met,-- the one leading to the heavenly home of peace, and the other leading to darkness and despair. He saw, he felt, the fearful mistake he had made in choosing the dark path, and following the leading of Satan, when angels of God were waiting and anxious to show him the path of light. Life to him was a failure. Distracted with grief and disappointment, he cried in agony, 'O my Father, give me back the days of my youth! Let me stand once more at the dividing ways, that I may choose the path of light.' But there was no Father's voice to answer, and the days of youth would not come back at his call. He thought of the companions of his youth who had chosen the better path, and he wished that he had gone with them. He wished that he had died in his infancy rather than to have lived a wasted life as he had done. With bitter remorse and blinding tears, he bowed his head and cried again, 'Oh that the days of my youth would come back! oh for a touch from the guiding angel's hand that once was put forth to lead me in the path of peace and holiness.' [Cf: The Youth's Instructor 01-05-81 para. 07] p. 269, Para. 2, [1881MS].

"And his youth did come back; for all that he had seen and said and felt was only the prophetic dream of one who was still young in years, yet had been rapidly growing old in sin. In an hour of sadness and weariness with the world, he had seen, by anticipation, the remorse and disappointment to which he was hastening in his wanderings from God; and he awoke with joy to find that there was yet time for him to choose the path of peace, of happiness, and of Heaven." [Cf: The Youth's Instructor 01-05-81 para. 08] p. 269, Para. 3, [1881MS].

I hope that the youth who read this will reflect in regard to the past, the present, and the future. Decide now, at the commencement of

the new year, that you will choose the path of righteousness, that you will be earnest and truehearted, and that life with you shall not prove a mistake. Go forward, guided by the heavenly angels; be courageous; be enterprising; let your light shine; and may the words of inspiration be applicable to you,--"I write unto you, young men, because ye are strong and have overcome the wicked one." Listen to the words of the great apostle, echoing down the ages: "Quit you like men, be strong." 1 Cor. 16:13. Men who are in the battle against falsity and wickedness, are found true and noble. They are men who will fight to the last rather than yield the contest. I close by wishing you a Happy New Year. By Ellen G. White. [Cf: The Youth's Instructor 01-05-81 para. 09] p. 269, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Instruction Concerning Education. I was shown that our College was designed of God to accomplish the great and good work of saving souls. It is only when brought under the full control of the Spirit of God that the talents of an individual are rendered useful to the fullest extent. The precepts and principles of religion are the first steps in the acquisition of knowledge, and lie at the very foundation of true education. Knowledge and science must be vitalized by the Spirit of God, in order to serve the noblest purposes. The Christian alone can make the right use of knowledge. Science, in order to be fully appreciated, must be viewed from a religious standpoint. Then all will worship the God of science. The heart which is ennobled by the grace of God can best comprehend the real value of education. The attributes of God as seen in his created works, can be appreciated only as we have a knowledge of the Creator. The teachers must be acquainted, not only with the theory of truth, but must have an experimental knowledge of the way of holiness, in order to lead the youth to the fountains of truth, to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. Knowledge is power only when united with true piety. A soul emptied of self will be noble. Christ abiding in the heart by faith, will make us wise in God's sight. [Cf: Pamphlet 040 p. 1 para. 01] p. 269, Para. 5, [1881MS].

My guide said, "Elevate the standard in all school education. You must set up no lower standard. Discipline must be maintained. Teach the youth by precept and example." There has not been too much strictness, but too much laxness of action tolerated; but the workers must not despair. Work with the Spirit of Christ, with the mind of Christ, to correct existing evils. Expect that the wrong-doers will have the sympathy of wrong-doers; but faithful shepherds of the flock have lessons to learn in order to keep on an elevated standard and yet teach that the star of hope is still shining. Work on patiently; but rebuke sin firmly, and give it no sanction. [Cf: Pamphlet 040 p. 1 para. 02] p. 270, Para. 1, [1881MS].

In the common schools the religion of the Bible is not made a part of the education. One essential, and the most important element, is left out of the program. Education is a work which will tell through the ceaseless ages of eternity. The teachers should be men and women of experience that can impart light from the throne of God in all their instructions. There has been a fearful neglect of duty with the parents, and when the children are sent to school, they should have teachers who have patience and self-control. [Cf: Pamphlet 040 p. 2 para. 01] p. 270, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Like Eli, the parents have not restrained their children, and when the conduct of their children is such that it testifies against their management, they think to obtain relief by sending them to college to be disciplined, and to learn better manners than the parents have taught them at home. Here the teachers are left with a task on their hands which few can appreciate. If they succeed in reforming this crude and undisciplined class, parents take the credit instead of giving it to the teacher. If the children choose the society of the evil-inclined, and go from bad to worse, then the teachers are censured, and the school is denounced as being what it should not be, when the condemnation justly belongs to the parents. They have the first and best years of the lives of their children, while they were teachable and impressible. But wicked and slothful parents have failed in their duty, and their children have become confirmed in an evil course. They were hardened like flint when sent to the College. [Cf: Pamphlet 040 p. 2 para. 02] p. 271, Para. 1, [1881MS].

If the parents had studied more of Christ and less of the world, if they had cared less to imitate the customs and fashions of the present age, and devoted time and painstaking effort to mold the minds and characters of their children after the divine Model, then they could send them forth with moral integrity to be carried forward in the branches of study to qualify them for any position of trust. The teachers, if God-fearing and God-loving, could take these children a step nearer heaven, train to make their capacities a blessing and not a curse. Connected with God, these instructors will exert an influence affecting the destiny of souls in leading them to the study and obedience of the law of God, carrying their minds up to the contemplation of eternal interests, opening before them a broad, expansive field of thought, presenting before them difficult Bible problems to master, strengthening the intellect to grasp grand and ennobling themes. After all this there will be an infinity beyond. [Cf: Pamphlet 040 p. 3 para. 01] p. 271, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The greatest work is before us. The peril which threatens our usefulness, and which will prove our ruin, if not seen and overcome, is selfishness,--placing a higher estimate upon our plans, our opinions, and our labors, and moving independently of our brethren. "Counsel together," have been the words repeated by the angel again and again. [Cf: Pamphlet 040 p. 3 para. 02] p. 271, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Satan may move through one man's mind to warp things out of their proper channel. He may succeed with two who view things in a similar light, but with several minds enlisted, there is greater safety against his wiles. Every plan will be more liable to be viewed from all sides, every advance will be more carefully studied, so that no enterprise will be so likely to be entered upon which will bring confusion and perplexity and defeat to the work in which we are engaged. In union there is strength: in division there is weakness and defeat. God is leading out a people, and fitting them for translation. Are we who are acting a part in this work standing as sentinels for God? Are we uniting our forces? Are we willing to become servants of all? Are we imitating the great Pattern? [Cf: Pamphlet 040 p. 3 para. 03] p. 272, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The College in Battle Creek is a place where young men and women should be trained according to God's plan of development and growth,

where the younger members of the Lord's family should be impressed that they are created in the image of their Maker, and that their spirit must represent the Spirit of Christ. All should feel that it is one of God's instrumentalities to make known the knowledge of himself to man. [Cf: Pamphlet 040 p. 4 para. 01] p. 272, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Cultivated intellects are now needed in every part of the work of God, for novices cannot do the work acceptably in unfolding the hidden treasure to enrich the soul. God has devised that schools shall be an instrumentality for developing workers for Jesus Christ, of whom he will not be ashamed, and this object must ever be kept in view. The height man may reach by proper culture, has not hitherto been realized. Mrs. E. G. White. [Cf: Pamphlet 040 p. 4 para. 02] p. 272, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Special Testimony Relative to Tract and Missionary Societies and Our Preachers. -- In my last vision I was pointed back to the rise and progress of the cause of present truth. When our publishing house at Battle Creek was first established, the friends of the cause were few, and our people generally were poor. But when calls for help were made, many came nobly forward, and aided the cause by taking stock in the publishing work. The Lord was well pleased with the spirit of sacrifice manifested. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 1 para. 01] p. 272, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Twenty-six years have passed since then, and in the providence of God the light of truth has been shining everywhere. The beginning was small, and it was necessary that great sacrifices should be made by the early friends of the cause. At every step, great obstacles had to be met and overcome. Our brethren who invested their means in our house of publication were doing the very work which the Lord would have them do. He had given them means to be used for the very purpose of advancing his cause. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 1 para. 02] p. 273, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The lapse of time has brought great changes. Light has increased, and has become widespread. While the people who are anxious for truth have been calling, "Watchman, what of the night?" the answer has been given intelligently, "The morning cometh, and also the night." By a thorough investigation of the prophecies we understand where we are in this world's history; and we know for a certainty that the second coming of Christ is near. The result of these investigations must be brought before the world through the press. And as the work has enlarged and increased, greater facilities have been demanded from year to year. Improvements have gone steadily forward. It has been a cause of wonder to the world that with this unpopular truth, such prosperity should attend the work. But with increased light and confirmed truth and greater advantages in every way for the advancement of the cause, our works do not comprehend with our faith. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 2 para. 01] p. 273, Para. 2, [1881MS].

If it was right for brethren to take stock in our publishing house when our work was small and our influence narrow, is it not of more consequence today, when a much larger work is going forward, and a corresponding increase of means is needed? The evidences of our position have been increasing with every year. We have been receiving fresh assurance that we have the truth as revealed in the word of God,-that in accepting the third angel's message we have not given heed to

fables, but to the "sure word of prophecy." We are now living in the full blaze of the light of Bible truth. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 2 para. 02] p. 273, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The Lord calls upon his people to arouse, and to show their faith by their works. In times past, when our numbers were few, when those who were able felt it their duty to take stock in our publishing house, their prayers and their alms, the fruit of persevering, self-denying efforts, came before God as a sweet savor. Our brethren and sisters who have received the precious bread of life, brought to them in our publications, should be even more willing to give of their means to support the cause than were those who loved the truth in former years. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 3 para. 01] p. 274, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Brethren, God would bless you in showing your interest in our houses of publication by making them your property. Those who own no stock in these institutions have the privilege of investing their means in this good work. We need your sympathy, your prayers, and your means. We need your hearty co-operation. We hope that all whose hearts the Lord shall make willing, will come forward with their means to invest in these institutions. Is it indeed true that we have the last message of mercy to be given to the world? Is it true that our work will soon close? Thus saith the word of God. The end of all things is at hand. Then the warning should be sent to all parts of the earth. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 3 para. 02] p. 274, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Our houses of publication have become a power in the world. A great change has taken place. With our increased facilities to make the clear light shine forth to those who are in darkness, it is not now as hard as it once was to see and accept the truth. Those who first led out in the work were objects of the combined assaults of evil men and evil angels. The enmity of Satan, working through men as his instruments, was strikingly developed. On the other hand, the believers, though few in number, were earnest and zealous to vindicate the honor of God in exalting his law, which had been made void, and to press back the workings of Satan revealed in every form of destructive error. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 3 para. 03] p. 274, Para. 3, [1881MS].

From the first, Satan has set himself against this work. He was determined to bring all his power to bear to silence and sweep from the earth those who were laboring for the advancement of light and truth. He has ever had a measure of success. Calumny and the fiercest opposition have been brought to bear to crush out the precious truth by discouraging its advocates. The great adversary has employed his hellish deceptions in various ways, and every effort made has brought to his side one or more of the professed followers of Christ. Those whose hearts are carnal, who are more in harmony with the arch deceiver than with Jesus Christ, have after a time developed their true character, and have gone to their own company. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 4 para. 01] p. 275, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Satan holds under his control not a few who pass as friends of the truth, and through them he works against its advancement. He employs them to sow tares among the people of God. Thus when danger was not suspected, great evils have existed among us. But while Satan was working with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, staunch advocates of truth have stemmed the tide of opposition, and

held the word uncorrupted amid a deluge of heresies. Although the church has at times been weakened through manifold discouragements and the rebellious element they have had to meet, still the truth has shone brighter with every conflict. The energies of God's people have not been exhausted. The power of his grace has quickened, revived, and ennobled the steadfast and the true. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 4 para. 02] p. 275, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Again and again was ancient Israel afflicted with rebellious murmurers. These were not always persons of feeble influence. In many cases, men of renown, rulers in Israel, turned against the providential leadings of God, and fiercely set to work to tear down that which they had once zealously built up. We have seen something of this repeated many times in our experience. It is unsafe for any church to lean upon some favorite minister, to trust in any arm of flesh. God's arm alone is able to uphold all who lean upon it. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 5 para. 01] p. 275, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Until Christ shall appear in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, men will become perverse in spirit, and turn from the truth to fables. The church will yet see troublous times. She will prophesy in sackcloth. But although she must meet heresies and persecutions, although she must battle with the infidel and the apostate, yet by the help of God she is bruising the head of Satan. The Lord will have a people as true as steel, and with faith as firm as the granite rock. They are to be his witnesses in the world, his instrumentalities to do a special, a glorious work in the day of his preparation. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 5 para. 02] p. 276, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The gospel message does not win a single soul to Christ, or make its way to a single heart, without wounding the head of Satan. Whenever a captive has been wrenched from his grasp, delivered from his oppression, the tyrant is defeated. The publishing houses, the presses, are instrumentalities in God's hand to send out to every tongue and nation the precious light of truth. This light is reaching even to heathen lands, and is constantly making inroads upon superstition and every conceivable error. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 6 para. 01] p. 276, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Ministers who have preached the truth with all zeal and earnestness may apostatize, and join the ranks of our enemies; but does this turn the truth of God into a lie? "Nevertheless," says the apostle, "the foundation of God standeth sure." The faith and feelings of men may change; but the truth of God, never. The third angel's message is sounding; it is infallible. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 6 para. 02] p. 276, Para. 3, [1881MS].

No man can serve God without uniting against himself, evil men and evil angels. Evil spirits will be put upon the track of every soul that seeks to join the ranks of Christ; for Satan wishes to recover the prey taken from his grasp. Evil men will give themselves over to believe strong delusions, that they may be damned. These men will put on the garments of sincerity, and deceive, if possible, the very elect. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 6 para. 03] p. 276, Para. 4, [1881MS].

It is as certain that we have the truth, as that God lives; and Satan,

with all his arts and hellish power, cannot change the truth of God into a lie. While the great adversary will try his utmost to make of none effect the word of God, truth must go forth as a lamp that burneth. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 7 para. 01] p. 277, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The Lord has singled us out, and made us subjects of his marvelous mercy. Shall we be charmed with the pratings of the apostate? Shall we choose to take our stand with Satan and his host? Shall we join with the transgressors of God's law? Rather let it be our prayer, Lord, put enmity between me and the serpent. If we are not at enmity with his works of darkness, his powerful folds encircle us, and his sting is ready at any moment to be driven to our hearts. We should count him a deadly foe. We should oppose him in the name of Jesus Christ. Our work is still onward. We must battle every inch of ground. Let all who name the name of Christ clothe themselves with the armor of righteousness. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 7 para. 02] p. 277, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Brethren and sisters, in behalf of our houses of publications we call upon you to take stock in these institutions. You have nothing to fear; invest your means where it will be doing good, scatter rays of light to the darkest parts of the world. There is no such thing as failure in this work. It is your privilege and duty to do now as your brethren have done when there were but few friends of the cause of truth. Take stock in our houses of publications, that you may feel that you have an interest in them. Many invest their money in worldly speculations, and in doing this, are robbed of every dollar. We ask you to show your liberality in making investments in our publishing work. It will do you good. Your money will not be lost, but will be placed at interest, to increase your capital stock in Heaven. Christ has given all for you; what will you give for him? He asks your heart; give it to him; it is his own. He asks your intellect; give it to him; it is his own. He asks your money; give it to him; it is his own. "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price." God wants you and yours. Let the words of the royal psalmist express the sentiment of your hearts: "All things come of Thee, and of thine own have we given thee." [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 7 para. 03] p. 277, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The time has come when we must know for ourselves why we believe as we do. We must stand for God and for the truth, against a reckless, unbelieving generation. The man who has once known the way of life, and has turned from the convictions of his own heart to the sophistry of Satan, will be more inaccessible and more unimpressible than he who has never tasted the love of Christ. He will be wise to do evil. He has bound himself to Satan, even against light and knowledge. I say to my brethren, Your only hope is in God. We must be clothed with Christ's righteousness, if we would withstand the prevailing impiety. We must show our faith by our works. Let us lay up for ourselves a good foundation against the time to come, that we may lay hold on eternal life. We must labor, not in our own strength, but in the strength of our risen Lord. What will we do and dare for Jesus? [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 8 para. 01] p. 278, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Our houses of publication are the property of all our people, and all should work to the point of raising them above embarrassment. In order to circulate our publications, they have been offered at so low a figure that but little profit could come to the Office to reproduce the same works. This has been done with the best of motives, but not with

experienced and far-seeing judgment. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 9 para. 01] p. 278, Para. 2, [1881MS].

At the low prices of publications, the Office could not preserve a capital upon which to work. This was not fully seen and critically investigated. These low prices led people to undervalue the works, and it was not fully discerned that when once these publications were placed at a low figure it would be very difficult to bring them up to their proper value. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 9 para. 02] p. 278, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Our ministers have not had suitable encouragement. They must have means, in order to live. There has been a sad lack of foresight in making the low prices upon our publications, and still another in turning the profits largely into the tract and missionary societies. These matters have been carried to extremes, and there will be a reaction. In order for the tract and missionary societies to flourish, the instrumentalities to make and print books must flourish. Cripple these instrumentalities, burden the publishing houses with embarrassment and debt, and the tract and missionary societies will not prove a success. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 9 para. 03] p. 279, Para. 1, [1881MS].

There has been wrong management, not designedly, but in zeal and ardor to carry forward the missionary work. In the distribution and wide circulation of papers, tracts, and pamphlets, the instrumentalities to produce these publications have been crippled and embarrassed. There is ever danger of carrying any good work to extremes. Responsible men are in danger of becoming one-idea men, of concentrating their thoughts upon one branch of the work, to the neglect of other parts of the great field. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 10 para. 01] p. 279, Para. 2, [1881MS].

As a people we need to be guarded on every point. There is not the least safety for any, unless we seek wisdom of God daily, and dare not move in our own strength. Danger is always surrounding us, and great caution should be used that no one branch of the work be made a specialty, while other interests are left to suffer. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 10 para. 02] p. 279, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Mistakes have been made in putting down prices of publications to meet certain difficulties. These efforts must change. Those who made this move were sincere. They thought their liberality would provoke ministers and people to labor to greatly increase the demand for the publications. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 10 para. 03] p. 279, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Ministers and people should act nobly and liberally in dealing with our publishing houses. Instead of studying and contriving how they can obtain periodicals, tracts, and books at the lowest figure, they should seek to bring the minds of the people to see the true value of the publications. All these pennies taken from thousands of publications have caused a loss of thousands of dollars to the Office, when to each individual a few pennies more would scarcely have been felt. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 10 para. 04] p. 279, Para. 5, [1881MS].

The *Review and Herald* and the *Signs of the Times* are cheap papers, at the full price. The *Review* is a valuable paper; it contains matters of

great interest to the church, and should be placed in every family of believers. If any are too poor to take it, the church should, by subscription, raise the amount of the full price of the paper, and supply the destitute families. How much better would be this plan than throwing the poor upon the mercies of the publishing house or the tract and missionary society. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 11 para. 01] p. 280, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The same course should be pursued toward the *Signs*. With slight variations, this paper has been increasing in interest and in moral worth as a pioneer sheet since its first establishment. These periodicals are one in interest. They are two instrumentalities in the great field to do their specific work in disseminating light in this day of God's preparation. All should engage just as earnestly to build up the one as the other. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 11 para. 02] p. 280, Para. 2, [1881MS].

"The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry." Christ will succor those who flee to him for wisdom and strength. If they meet duty and trial with humility of soul, depending upon Jesus, his mighty angel will be round about them, and He whom they have trusted will prove an all-sufficient helper to them in every emergency. Those who occupy responsible positions should daily become more intimately acquainted with the excellency, the faithfulness, and the love of Christ. They should be able to exclaim with assurance, "I know whom I have believed." These men should work as brethren, without one feeling of strife. Each should do his duty, knowing that the eye of God is searching motives and purposes, and reading the inmost feelings of the soul. The work is one. And if leading men do not let their own mind and their own feelings and ideas come in to rule and change the Lord's design, there will be the most perfect harmony between these two branches of the same work. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 11 para. 03] p. 280, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Our people should make greater efforts to extend the circulation of the *Review*. If our brethren and sisters would only manifest greater earnestness and put forth more persevering efforts to accomplish this, it would be done. Every family should have this paper. And if they would deny themselves their darling luxuries, tea and coffee, many who do not now have its weekly visits might take the money spent for these hurtful stimulants and pay for the messenger of light to come into their household. Almost every family takes one or more secular papers, and these frequently contain love stories and exciting tales of villainy and murder which injure the mind of all who read them. Those who consent to do without this precious weekly visitor, lose much. Through its pages, Christ may speak to them in warnings, in reproofs and counsel, which would change the current of their thoughts, and be to them as the bread of life. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 12 para. 01] p. 281, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Our papers should not be filled with long discussions or long doctrinal arguments, which would weary the reader; but they should contain short and interesting doctrinal and practical articles. The price of our papers should not be made so low that no margin is left to work upon. The same interest which has been manifested to circulate the *Signs of the Times* should be shown in extending the circulation of the *Review*. If this is done, success will attend the effort. [Cf: Pamphlet

083 p. 13 para. 01] p. 281, Para. 2, [1881MS].

We are upon the enchanted ground, and Satan is continually at work to rock our people to sleep in the cradle of carnal security. There is an indifference, a lack of zeal, that paralyzes all our efforts. Jesus was a zealous worker, and when his followers shall lean on him, and work as he worked, they will see and realize corresponding results. An effort must be made to place a proper value on our publications, and bring them back gradually to a proper basis. We should not be affected by the cry of speculation, money-making! We should press steadily forward, unmoved by censure, uncorrupted by applause. It will be a greater task to work back upon a proper basis than many suppose; but it must be done, in order to save our institutions from embarrassment. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 13 para. 02] p. 281, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Our brethren should be guarded, lest they become stereotyped in their plans and labors. They may spend time and money in preparing an exact channel, that the work must be done in just such a way or it is not done right. There is danger of being too particular. There should be greater care to avoid expenses in transporting books and persons. The influence is bad upon the cause of God. Brethren, you should move cautiously, economically, and judiciously. A great work is to be done, and our Offices are embarrassed. There are men who work faithfully in the Office at Battle Creek, who do not receive an equivalent for their labor. Justice is not done these men. In other work they could earn double the amount received here; but they conscientiously keep to their business, because they feel that God's cause needs their help. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 14 para. 01] p. 282, Para. 1, [1881MS].

There is a great work to be done in the day of God's preparation, in planning and executing for the advancement of the cause of God. Our publications should have a wide circulation; for they are doing a great work. There is much missionary work to be done. But I have been shown that there is danger of having this work too mechanical, so intricate and complicated that less will be accomplished than if it were more simple, direct, plain, and decided. We have neither time nor means to keep all parts of this machinery in harmonious action. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 14 para. 02] p. 282, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Our brethren who bear responsibilities in devising plans for carrying forward this part of the work, must keep in mind that while a certain amount of education and training is essential in order to work intelligently, there is danger of making this too great a matter. By obtaining a most thorough education in all the minutiae, and leaving vital principles out of the question, we become dry and formal workers. The hearts that God has made willing by the operations of his grace, are fitted for the work. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 15 para. 01] p. 282, Para. 3, [1881MS].

God wants heart-work. The unselfish purpose, the pure, elevated principle, the high and holy motive, God will accept. His grace and power will work with these efforts. All who realize that it is the work of God to prepare a people for his coming, will find in their disinterested efforts opportunities where they can do tract and missionary labor. But there may be too much means expended and too much time occupied in making matters so fine and so minute that the heart-work is neglected, and a dry form preserved. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 15

para. 02] p. 283, Para. 1, [1881MS].

I tell you frankly that Jesus and the power of his grace are being left out of the question. Results will show that the mechanical working has taken the place of piety, humility, and holiness of heart and life. The more spiritual, devoted, and humble workers find no place where they can take hold, and therefore they stand back. The young and inexperienced learn the form, and do their work mechanically; but true love and the burden for souls is not felt. Less dwelling upon set forms, less of the mechanical, and more of the power of godliness, is essential in this solemn, fearful day of responsibilities. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 15 para. 03] p. 283, Para. 2, [1881MS].

There is order in Heaven; and there should be system and order upon the earth, that the work may move forward without confusion and fanaticism. Our brethren have been working to this end; but while some of our ministers continually bear the burden of souls, and ever seek to bring the people up in spiritual attainments, those who are not so conscientious, and who have not carried the cross of Christ nor felt the value of souls as reflected from Calvary, will, in teaching and educating others in the mechanical working, become formal and powerless themselves, and bring no Saviour to the people. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 16 para. 01] p. 283, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Satan is ever working to have the service of God degenerate into dry form, and become powerless in saving souls. While the energy, earnestness, and efficiency to the workers become deadened by the efforts of have everything so systematic, the taxing labor that must be done by our ministers to keep this complicated machinery in motion, engrosses so much time that the spiritual work is neglected. With so many things to run, this work takes much time, and requires so large an amount of means that other branches of the work will wither and die for want of due attention. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 16 para. 02] p. 283, Para. 4, [1881MS].

While the silent messengers of truth should be scattered like the leaves of autumn, our ministers should not make this work a form, and leave devotion and true piety out of the question. Ten truly converted, willing-minded, unselfish workers can do more in the missionary field than one hundred who confine their efforts to set forms, and preserve mechanical rules, working without deep love for souls. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 16 para. 03] p. 284, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Vigilant missionary work must in no case be neglected. It has done much for the salvation of souls. The success of God's work depends very much upon this; but those who do this work are to be those who are spiritual, whose letters will breathe the light and love of Jesus, and who feel the burden of the work. They should be men and women who can pray, who have a close connection with God. The ready mind, the sanctified will and sound judgment, are needed. These will have learned of the heavenly Teacher the most successful manner of appealing to souls. These will have learned their lessons in the school of Christ. They will do their work with an eye single to the glory of God. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 17 para. 01] p. 284, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Without this education, all the teachings received from your instructors in regard to forms and rules, however thorough the lessons

may be, will leave you still novices in the work. You must learn of Christ. You should deny self for Christ. You must carry the burden of Christ. You should put your neck under the yoke of Christ. You must feel that you are not your own, but servants of Christ, doing a work that he has enjoined upon you, not for any praise or honor or glory that you shall receive, but for his own sake. Into all your work you should weave his grace, his love, his devotion, his zeal, his untiring perseverance, his indomitable energy, that will tell for time and for eternity. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 17 para. 02] p. 284, Para. 3, [1881MS].

The tract and missionary work is a good work. It is God's work. It should be in no way belittled; but there is continual danger of perverting it from its true object. Canvassers are wanted to labor in the missionary field. Persons of uncouth manners, would not be fitted for this work. Men and women who possess tact, good address, keen foresight, discriminating minds, and who feel the value of souls, are the ones who can be successful. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 18 para. 01] p. 285, Para. 1, [1881MS].

The work of the colporter is elevated, and will prove a success, if he is honest, earnest, and patient, steadily pursuing the work he has undertaken. His heart must be in the work. He must rise early, and work industriously, putting to proper use the faculties God has given him. Difficulties must be met. If confronted with unceasing perseverance, they will be overcome. Much is gained by courtesy. The worker may continually be forming a symmetrical character. Great characters are made by little acts and efforts. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 18 para. 02] p. 285, Para. 2, [1881MS].

There is danger of not giving sufficient encouragement to our ministers. I was shown some men whom God was calling to the work of the ministry, entering the field as canvassers. This is an excellent preparation, if their object is to disseminate light, to bring the truth revealed in God's word directly to the home circle. In conversation, the way will frequently be opened to speak of the religion of the Bible. If the work is taken hold of as it should be, families will be visited, the workers will carry with them tender hearts and love for souls, and will bear, in words and deportment, the sweet fragrance of the grace of Christ, and great good will be the result. This would be an excellent experience for any who have the ministry in view. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 18 para. 03] p. 285, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Many are attracted into the canvassing field to sell pictures and books that do not express our faith, and do not give light to the purchaser. They are induced to do this because the financial prospects are more flattering than can be offered them as licentiates. These persons are obtaining no special fitness for the gospel ministry. They are not gaining that experience which would fit them for the work. They are losing time and opportunity by this kind of labor. They are not learning to bear the burden of souls, and daily obtaining a knowledge of the most successful way of winning people to the truth. These men are frequently turned aside from the convictions of the Spirit of God, and receive a worldly stamp of character, forgetting how much they owe to the Lord, who gave his life for them. They use their powers for their own selfish interests, and refuse to labor in the vineyard of the Lord. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 19 para. 01] p. 285, Para. 4, [1881MS].

I was alarmed as I saw the various nets of Satan woven about men whom God would use, diverting them from the work of the ministry. There will surely be a dearth of laborers, unless there is more encouragement given men to improve their ability with the purpose of becoming ministers of Christ. Satan is constantly and perseveringly presenting financial gain and worldly advantages to engage the minds and powers of men, and keep them from doing the duties essential to give them an experience in the things of God. And when he sees that men will move forward, giving themselves to the work of teaching the truth to those who are in darkness, he will do his utmost to push them to extremes in something that will weaken their influence and cause them to lose the advantage they would gain, were they balanced by the Spirit of God. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 19 para. 02] p. 286, Para. 1, [1881MS].

I was shown that our ministers were doing themselves great injury by carelessness in the use of their vocal organs. Their attention was called to this important matter, and cautions and instructions were given them, by the Spirit of God. It was their duty to learn the wisest manner of using these organs. The voice, this gift of Heaven, is a powerful faculty for good, and if not perverted, would glorify God. All that was essential was to study and conscientiously follow a few simple rules. But instead of educating themselves under the discipline of self-control, and doing what they might have done by exercising a little common sense and practicing according to their best knowledge of the art of speaking, they employed a professor of elocution. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 20 para. 01] p. 286, Para. 2, [1881MS].

As a result, many who were feeling that God had a work for them to do in teaching the truth to others, have become infatuated and crazed with elocutions. All that certain ones needed was this temptation opened before them. Their interest was attracted by the novelty, and young men and some ministers were carried away with this excitement. They left their fields of labor--everything in the vineyard of the Lord was neglected--and paid their money and gave their precious time to attend a school of elocution. When they came from this drill, devotion and religion had parted company with them, and the burden of souls was laid off, as they would lay aside a garment. They had accepted Satan's suggestion, and he had led them where he chose. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 20 para. 02] p. 287, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Some set themselves up as teachers of elocution, who had neither discretion nor ability, and made themselves disgusting to the public, for they did not properly use what knowledge they had gained. Their performances were void of dignity or good sense; and these exploits on their part closed the door, as far as they are known, to any influence they may have in future as men to carry the message of truth to the world. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 21 para. 01] p. 287, Para. 2, [1881MS].

This was Satan's device. It was well to have knowledge of how to speak, but to give time and money to this one branch, and absorb the mind with it, was rushing into extremes and showing great weakness. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 21 para. 02] p. 287, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Young men professing to be Sabbath-keepers attach professors to their name, and abuse the community with that which they do not understand. Many men will thus abuse the light God has seen fit to give them. They

have not well-balanced minds. Elocution has become a by-word. It has caught up men to engage in a work that they cannot do wisely, and spoiled them for doing a work which, if they had been humbly and modestly seeking to accomplish in the fear of God, they would have made a glorious success. These youth might have been fitting for usefulness in the missionary field as canvassers and colporteurs, or as licentiates proving themselves for ministerial labor, doing work for time and for eternity. But they have been crazed with the thought of becoming teachers of elocution, and Satan stands and laughs that he has caught them in the net which he had laid for them. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 21 para. 03] p. 287, Para. 4, [1881MS].

God's servants should ever be united. They should repress and control strong traits of character, and day by day they should carefully reflect upon the nature of the life structure they are building. Are they Christian gentlemen in their daily lives? Are there seen in their lives noble, upright deeds, which will make their building of character stand forth as a fair temple of God? As one poor timber will sink a ship, and one flaw make a chain worthless, so one demoralizing trait of character revealed in words or actions will leave its influence for evil; and if not overcome, will subvert every virtue. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 22 para. 01] p. 288, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Every faculty in man is a workman, that is building for time and for eternity. Day by day the structure is going up, although the possessor is not aware of it. It is a building which must stand either as a beacon of warning because of its deformity, or as a structure which God and angels will admire for its harmony with the divine Model. The mental and moral powers which God has given us do not consider character. They are talents, which we are to improve, and which if properly improved will form a right character. A man may have precious seed in his hand, but that seed is not an orchard. The seed must be planted, before it can become a tree. The mind is the garden; the character is the fruit. God has given us our faculties to cultivate and develop. Our own course determines our character. In training these powers so that they shall harmonize and form a valuable character, we have a work which no one but ourselves can do. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 22 para. 02] p. 288, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Those who have sharp, rough traits of character are guilty before God if they do not, by training, repress and root out all the bitterness of their nature. The man who yields to impatience is serving Satan. "To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey." A good character is more precious in God's sight than the gold of Ophir. The Lord would have men act for time and for eternity. We have received good and bad as a legacy, and by cultivation we may make the bad worse, or the good better. Shall the bad gain the ascendancy, as with Judas, or shall the evils be purged from our souls, and the good predominate? [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 23 para. 01] p. 289, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Principle, right, honesty, should ever be cherished. Honesty will not tarry where policy is harbored. They will never agree; one is of Baal, the other of God. The Master requires his servants to be honorable in motive and action. All greed, all avarice, must be overcome. Those who choose honesty as their companion will embody it in all their acts. To a large class, these men are not pleasing, but to God they are

beautiful. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 23 para. 02] p. 289, Para. 2, [1881MS].

Satan is working to crowd himself in everywhere. He would put asunder very friends. There are men who are ever talking and gossiping and bearing false witness, who sow the seeds of discord, and engender strife. Heaven looks upon this class as Satan's most efficient servants. But the man who is injured is in a far less dangerous position than when fawned upon and extolled for a few of his efforts which appear successful. The commendation of apparent friends is more dangerous than reproach. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 24 para. 01] p. 289, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Every man who praises himself, brushes the lustre from his best efforts. A truly noble character will not stop to resent the false accusations of enemies; every word spoken falls harmless; for it strengthens that which it cannot overthrow. The Lord would have his people closely united with himself, the God of patience and love. All should manifest in their lives the love of Christ. Let none venture to belittle the reputation or the position of another; this is egotism. It is saying, "I am so much better and more capable than you, that God gives me the preference. You are not of much account." [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 24 para. 02] p. 289, Para. 4, [1881MS].

Our ministers in responsible places are men whom God has accepted. No matter what their origin, no matter what their former position, whether they followed the plow, worked at the carpenter's trade, or enjoyed the discipline of a college; if God has accepted them, let every man beware of casting the slightest reflection upon them. Never speak disparagingly of any man; for he may be great in the sight of the Lord; while those who feel great may be lightly esteemed of God because of the perversity of their hearts. Our only safety is to lie low at the foot of the cross, be little in our own eyes, and trust in God; for he alone has power to make us great. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 24 para. 03] p. 290, Para. 1, [1881MS].

Our ministers are in danger of taking credit to themselves in the work which they do. They think God is favoring them, and they become independent and self-sufficient; then the Lord gives them up to the buffetings of Satan. In order to do God's work with acceptance, we must have the spirit of meekness, of lowliness of mind, each esteeming other better than himself. There is much at stake. The judgment and ability of all are needed now. Every man's work is of sufficient importance to demand that it be performed with care and fidelity. One man cannot do the work of all. Each has his respective place and his special work, and each should realize that the manner in which his work is done must stand the test of the Judgment. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 25 para. 01] p. 290, Para. 2, [1881MS].

The work before us is important and extensive. The day of God is hastening on, and all the workers in the Lord's great field should be men who are striving to become perfect, wanting in nothing, coming behind in no gift, waiting for the appearing of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven. Not one moment of our precious time should be devoted to bringing others to conform to our personal ideas and opinions. God would educate men engaged as co-laborers in this great work to the highest exercise of faith, and the development of a harmonious

character. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 25 para. 02] p. 290, Para. 3, [1881MS].

Men have varied gifts, and some are better adapted to one branch of the work than another. What one man would fail to do, his brother minister may be strong to accomplish. The work of each in his position is important. One man's mind is not to control another. If one man stands up, feeling that no one shall influence him, that he has judgment and ability to comprehend every branch of the work, that man will fail of the grace of God. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 26 para. 01] p. 291, Para. 1, [1881MS].

My husband has experience and qualities that are valuable, if these can be sanctified by the grace of Christ. God will make his labors wholly acceptable if he will imitate the Pattern. But if he does not bring his will and his mind under the control of the spirit of Christ, God cannot use him. His efforts and work will be wrought in self, and his experience, so valuable to the cause, will be so mingled with his own ways, and his own words, that God will not accept it. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 26 para. 02] p. 291, Para. 2, [1881MS].

God would have Elders Haskell, Butler, Whitney, and White come close to his side, and see and develop the attractive loveliness of Jesus Christ. These men may have precious qualities, understanding, and aptness; but unless Christ is pervading the soul, and revealed in the character, all these advantages will be no more acceptable than the offering of Cain. They will lack the savor. Cain's offering was good in itself, but there was no Saviour in it. [Cf: Pamphlet 083 p. 26 para. 03] p. 291, Para. 3, [1881MS].