KEYS OF THE KINGDOM

SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON Quarterly

Senior Division, No. 298, Fourth Quarter, 1969

THE BLESSING OF DAILY STUDY

"Set apart a little time each day for study of the Sabbath School lesson."—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students,* page 137.

"Let the Sabbath School lesson be learned, not by a hasty glance at the lesson scripture on Sabbath morning, but by careful study for the next week on Sabbath afternoon, with daily review or illustration during the week. Thus the lesson will become fixed in the memory, a treasure never to be wholly lost." —*Education,* pages 251, 252.

My Daily Lesson Study Pledge

As one who greatly desires to improve his knowledge of the Scriptures, I pledge myself to the careful and prayerful study of some portion of my Sabbath School lesson each day of the week.

Name _____

Lesson Titles for the Quarter

1. Christ, the Author and the Theme of Scripture.
2. The Inspiration of the Scriptures.
3. Searching the Scriptures.
4. The Two Books of God.
5. The Sure Word of Prophecy.
6. The Historical Bible.
7. Conditional Prophecy.
8. Prophecies Concerning Israel—I.
9. Prophecies Concerning Israel—II.
10. Treasures New and Old.
11. Responsibilities of Bible Study.
12. The Scriptures and My Life.
13. Triumph of the Scriptures.

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Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly

KEYS OF THE KINGDOM

A Series of Sabbath School Lessons Dealing With
The Holy Scriptures, Their Study, Meaning, and Application

"And I will give unto thee the keys of
the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 16:19.

" 'The keys of the kingdom of heaven' are the words of Christ. All the words of Holy Scripture are His, and are here included. These words have power to open and to shut heaven."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 413.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Keys to Bible Study

During this quarter we shall discuss the theme, "The Holy Scriptures, their study, meaning, and application." How can we get the most spiritual benefit and enjoyment out of reading God's Word? Let us think of the Scriptures as a storehouse full of valuable treasures. In order to open up the treasure-house and find access to the priceless gems of truth, the Bible student must have in his possession certain keys. These may be labeled as follows:

1. Spiritual sense of "sight" and "hearing."

The student must come to the Bible prayerfully, with open eyes to observe and a willing spirit to be taught the truth. He should study the context of each scripture, know the essential geographical and historical connections related to the different passages, and as far as possible be acquainted with the writer and his biographical background. So that the words of the prophets in the Scriptures may be understood, careful study should also be given as to whether there should be a past, present, or future application made of the text. Each scripture should always be compared with other scripture. If the student does this, then with sensitive spiritual "ears" he may "hear"—that is, become aware of—what the Spirit of truth has for him personally in the passage before him.

2. Good judgment.

The Bible student should carefully weigh the evidence of each paragraph. Is it historical in nature or prophetic? literal or symbolic? He must also seek to ascertain what the inspired writer had in mind. What did the text mean to him and what does it mean to us today?

3. Good sense of values.

The student should see each gem in the treasure-house of truth in relation to the others, the part in relation to the whole. Where does it belong in the whole plan of redemption? No Bible truth has value except as related to Christ and the whole truth of the gospel.

4. Good "heart" sense.

What will *I* do with this truth? What is it worth to *me*? How can I apply it to my own heart? What duty does it point out to me? All Bible study is meant to benefit the seeker for truth himself as well as the whole church.

5. Good sense of obligation.

Gems are of value to all, not simply to the miner himself. So the truth discovered must be shared. How to communicate the light received should become a subject for study. Gems of truth shared with others encourage the quest to discover more and still more of the jewels of the Lord.

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Christ, the Author and the Theme of Scripture

MEMORY VERSE: "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me." John 5:39.

STUDY HELPS: "The Desire of Ages," pages 413, 414; "Fundamentals of Christian Education," pages 308, 381-389; "Steps to Christ," chapter, "A Knowledge of God"; "SDA Bible Dictionary," pages 144, 1152; "SDA Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To find the central theme of the Old and New Testament revelations; and to discover how Christ regarded the Old Testament Scriptures in relation to Himself and to His mission to the world.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Author and Theme of Scripture

1. The word of Christ, the source of truth. Col. 3:16 (first part).
2. Christ speaks through the prophets. 1 Peter 1:10-12.
3. Old Testament Scriptures testified of Christ. John 5:39.

II. His Knowledge of the Scriptures

4. His knowledge foretold. Isa. 11:1-3.
5. His respect for God's Word foretold. Ps. 40:7, 8.
6. His weapon in temptation. Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13.
7. His Word is powerful. Heb. 4:12.
8. His prophets speak with power. Hosea 6:5.

III. His Reverence for the Old Testament

9. He taught with certainty. Luke 4:32; Matt. 7:29.
10. He amplified God's revealed will. Matt. 5:21, 22, 27, 28, 38, 39, 43, 44.
11. He pointed men to the Scriptures. Matt. 21:42 (first part); Luke 10:26.

IV. His Use of the Scriptures

12. He recognized man's need. John 3:19-21; 1:9-11, 5.
13. He spoke through all the prophets. Luke 24:25-27.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"From the promise given to Adam, down through the patriarchal line and the legal economy, heaven's glorious light made plain the footsteps of the Redeemer. Seers beheld the Star of Bethlehem, the Shiloh to come, as future things swept before them in mysterious procession. In every sacrifice Christ's death was shown. In every cloud of incense His righteousness ascended. By every jubilee trumpet His name was sounded. In the awful mystery of the holy of holies His glory dwelt."—*The Desire of Ages,* pages 211, 212.

The Author and Theme of Scripture

1. What admonition did Paul give the church at Colosse? Col. 3:16 (first part). Compare John 5:24; 2 Thess. 3:1.

NOTE.—The Biblical expressions, "The word of Christ," "My word," "The word of the Lord," all refer to God's message made known to men. Through His Spirit, Christ is the Author of this Word, speaking to us through the prophets. The Bible

is the Word of God in the language of men, even as Christ was the Word "made flesh." John 1:14. In His divine-human form He is "God's thought made visible, audible, and intelligible to human beings, particularly with respect to His infinite purpose that all men should find salvation." —*SDA Bible Dictionary,* on "Word," page 1152.

2. With whose Spirit were the Old Testament prophets imbued? 1 Peter 1:10-12.

NOTE.—The prophets' teachings harmonize because there is only one Author speaking through them all. The New Testament writers quote liberally from the Old Testament (1) to show the fulfillment of certain Old Testament passages in the person and ministry of Christ, in events in the nation of Israel, in the reception of the gospel by Gentiles, and in the development of the Christian church; (2) to make plain the plan of redemption prefigured in the Old Testament and now made real by the blood of Christ; (3) to reinforce truths of eternal consequence taught clearly in the Old Testament, largely forgotten or misunderstood, now strengthened by New Testament teaching.

3. What is the great central theme of Old Testament Scriptures? John 5:39.

His Knowledge of the Scriptures

4. What did Isaiah predict concerning the spirit that was to rest upon Christ? Isa. 11:1-3. Compare Luke 2:41-49.

NOTE.—"And all who heard Him were amazed at His intelligence and the answers He gave." Luke 2:47, NEB.

"Jesus seemed to know the Scriptures from beginning to end, and He presented them in their true import."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 85.

During the days of Jesus' youthful conflict and throughout His earthly life God's Word was His guide. "To every temptation He had one answer, 'It is written.' "—*Ibid.,* p. 88. Jesus' every thought and action were in harmony with the Scriptures. To this familiarity with God's Word may be traced in large measure His great wisdom, understanding, and power.

5. What prophecy pinpointed Christ's relationship to the revealed will of God? Ps. 40:7, 8. Compare Ps. 119:9-11; Heb. 10:5-7; Luke 24:44, 45.

NOTE.—The expression "the law of Moses" in Luke 24:44 refers to God's message to man recorded in the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament. Frequently in Scripture this is abbreviated to "the law," which the Bible writers—as in Psalm 40:7, 8—also use in a general sense to refer to all of God's will as revealed in the Old Testament.

"The Child Jesus did not receive instruction in the synagogue schools. His mother was His first human teacher. From her lips and from the scrolls of the prophets, He learned of heavenly things. The very words which He Himself had spoken to Moses for Israel He was now taught at His mother's knee. As He advanced from childhood to youth, He did not seek the schools of the rabbis. He needed not the education to be obtained from such sources; for God was His instructor."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 70.

6. When Jesus faced temptation, what weapon did He use? Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13. Compare Eph. 6: 11-13, 17 (last part).

NOTE.—"Jesus met Satan with the words of Scripture. 'It is written,' He said. In every temptation the weapon of His warfare was the Word of God. Satan demanded of Christ a miracle as a sign of His divinity. But that which is greater than all miracles, a firm reliance upon a 'Thus saith the Lord,' was a sign that could not be controverted. So long as Christ held to this position, the tempter could gain no advantage."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 120.

7. To what is the Word of God compared? Heb. 4:12.

NOTE.—"Practical truth must be brought into the life, and the Word, like a sharp, two-edged sword, must cut away the surplus of self that there is in our characters." —Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary,* Vol. 7, p. 928.

8. What did God say He had done "by the prophets," and what had been the effect of God's words? Hosea 6:5.

NOTE.—"The figure is that of hard stone or wood to which, by hewing, the right shape is given, and obdurate Israel is conceived of as having been subjected to such treatment for its good through the objurgations [reproofs] of the prophets."—*Lange's Commentary,* on Hosea 6:5.

His Reverence for the Old Testament

9. What was the reaction of the people to Christ's teaching? Luke 4: 32; Matt. 7:29.

NOTE.—"The rabbis spoke with doubt and hesitancy, as if the Scriptures might be interpreted to mean one thing or exactly the opposite. The hearers were daily involved in greater uncertainty. But Jesus taught the Scriptures as of unquestionable authority. Whatever His subject, it was presented with power, as if His words could not be controverted."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 253.

10. In His Sermon on the Mount, how did Jesus magnify and amplify Old Testament instruction? Matt. 5: 21, 22, 27, 28, 38, 39, 43, 44.

NOTE.—"His mission was to 'magnify the law, and make it honorable.' Isaiah 42:21. He was to show the spiritual nature of the law, to present its far-reaching principles, and to make plain its eternal obligation."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing,* page 49.

11. In His teaching ministry, what questions did Jesus ask? Matt. 21:42 (first part); Luke 10:26.

NOTE.—Jesus always pointed to the Old Testament Scriptures as authoritative. His probing questions were stimulants—as if He were saying, "The truth is in the Scriptures if you will search for it diligently. As you read, listen to God's Word speaking to you. Do not get into the habit of skimming the surface. Dig deep."

His Use of the Scriptures

12. What was man's reaction when light came into the world? John 3:19-21; 1:9-11, 5. Compare Rom. 1:21, 25.

NOTE.—"Men had well-nigh ceased to discern God in His works. The sinfulness of humanity had cast a pall over the fair face of creation; and instead of manifesting God, His works became a barrier that concealed Him. Men 'worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator.' Thus the heathen 'became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.' Rom. 1:25, 21. So in Israel, man's teaching had been put in the place of God's. Not only the things of nature, but the sacrificial service and the Scriptures themselves—all given to reveal God—were so perverted that they became the means of concealing Him.

"Christ sought to remove that which obscured the truth. The veil that sin has cast over the face of nature, He came to draw aside, bringing to view the spiritual glory that all things were created to reflect. His words placed the teachings of nature as well as of the Bible in a new aspect, and made them a new revelation." —*Christ's Object Lessons,* pages 18, 19.

13. How thorough and broad was Christ's use of the Scriptures? Luke 24:25-27.

NOTE.—"Beginning at Moses, the very Alpha of Bible history, Christ expounded in

all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Had He first made Himself known to them, their hearts would have been satisfied. In the fullness of their joy they would have hungered for nothing more. But it was necessary for them to understand the witness borne to Him by the types and prophecies of the Old Testament. Upon these their faith must be established. Christ performed no miracle to convince them, but it was His first work to explain the Scriptures. They had looked upon His death as the destruction of all their hopes. Now He showed from the prophets that this was the very strongest evidence for their faith.

"In teaching these disciples, Jesus showed the importance of the Old Testament as a witness to His mission. Many professed Christians now discard the Old Testament, claiming that it is no longer of any use. But such is not Christ's teaching. So highly did He value it that at one time He said, 'If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.' Luke 16:31.

"It is the voice of Christ that speaks through patriarchs and prophets, from the days of Adam even to the closing scenes of time."—*The Desire of Ages,* pages 796-799.

Lesson 2, for October 11, 1969

The Inspiration of the Scriptures

MEMORY VERSE: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

STUDY HELPS: "The Great Controversy," pages v-xii; "Selected Messages," Bk. 1, pp. 19-23, 25, 26; "Testimonies," Vol. 4, p. 449; Vol. 5, p. 747; "SDA Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To seek to discover in the Bible itself a basis for faith in it as an inspired revelation of God's truth.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Early Revelations of God to Man

1. Face-to-face communion. Gen. 1:27-29; 2:15-17.
2. Sin hid God's face from man. Gen. 3:1-6.
3. Earliest written revelation. John 1:17 (first part).

II. How God's Book Came to Man

4. The prophets speak for God. Amos 3:7; Heb. 1:1.
5. Oral messages. Ezek. 40:2-4; 44:4-6.
6. Written messages. Rev. 1:10, 11.
7. Source of prophetic utterances. Jer. 2:2; Ezek. 6:1, 2.
8. Prophetic writings called "Scriptures." 2 Peter 3:15, 16.
9. God's message to be given to men. 2 Tim. 4:1, 2.

III. Inspired Nature of the Book

10. Its source. 2 Tim. 3:16 (first part).
11. Its results. 2 Tim. 3:15; 1 Peter 1:23.

IV. Dimensions of God's Book

12. Four profitable dimensions. 2 Tim. 3:16 (last part).
13. Study leads to perfection. 2 Tim. 3:17.
14. Provides safeguards. Ps. 119:11, 104.

Introduction

"The Bible points to God as its author; yet it was written by human hands; and in the varied style of its different books it presents the characteristics of the several writers. The truths revealed are all 'given by inspiration of God' (2 Timothy 3:16); yet they are expressed in the words of men. The Infinite One by His Holy Spirit has shed light into the minds and hearts of His servants. He has given dreams and visions, symbols and figures; and those to whom the truth was thus revealed, have themselves embodied the thought in human language.

"The Ten Commandments were spoken by God Himself, and were written by His own hand. They are of divine, and not of human composition. But the Bible, with its God-given truths expressed in the language of men, presents a union of the divine with the human. Such a union existed in the nature of Christ, who was the Son of God and the Son of man. Thus it is true of the Bible, as it was of Christ, that 'the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.' John 1:14."—*The Great Controversy,* Introduction, pages v, vi.

"The Holy Scriptures are to be accepted as an authoritative, infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the revealer of doctrines, and the test of experience."—*Ibid.,* p. vii.

Early Revelations of God to Man

1. How did God communicate with man in Eden? Gen. 1:27-29; 2:15-17.

NOTE.—The Creator spoke to Adam and Eve face to face, instructing them concerning His will. "The holy pair were not only children under the fatherly care of God but students receiving instruction from the all-wise Creator. They were visited by angels, and were granted communion with their Maker, with no obscuring veil between."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 50.

2. What broke the face-to-face communion between God and man? Gen. 3:1-6. Compare Isa. 59:1, 2.

NOTE.—"Before the entrance of sin, Adam enjoyed open communion with his Maker; but since man separated himself from God by transgression, the human race has been cut off from this high privilege. By the plan of redemption, however, a way has been opened whereby the inhabitants of the earth may still have connection with heaven. God has communicated with men by His Spirit, and divine light has been imparted to the world by revelations to His chosen servants. 'Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' 2 Peter 1:21."—*The Great Controversy,* Introduction, page v.

3. By whose hand was "the law," or earliest written revelation of God's will, given to men? John 1:17 (first part).

NOTE.—"The preparation of the Written Word began in the time of Moses. Inspired revelations were then embodied in an inspired Book. This work continued during the long period of sixteen hundred years—from Moses, the historian of creation and the law, to John, the recorder of the most sublime truths of the gospel."—*The Great Controversy,* Introduction, page v.

How God's Book Came to Man

4. What human instrumentalities has God used to communicate with man? Amos 3:7; Heb. 1:1.

5. In what manner did Ezekiel receive instruction from God? Ezek. 40: 2-4; 44:4-6.

6. How was John instructed to communicate the light he received? Rev. 1:10, 11.

NOTE.—The Scriptures teach that the Lord's messages were communicated to the

prophets in visions and dreams. (Num. 12:6). These revelations were then embodied in human language and communicated to the people. The truths received were sometimes spoken, sometimes written. Note the following phrases: "*spoken* of by Daniel the prophet" (Matt. 24:15); "*spoken* of the Lord by the prophet" (Matt. 1:22); "things which are *written* may be fulfilled" (Luke 21:22); "Moses in the law, and the prophets, did *write*" (John 1:45).

7. Whom did prophets acknowledge as the source of their messages to the people? Jer. 2:2; Ezek. 6:1, 2.

NOTE.—God's prophetic messengers declared to Israel that the "word of the Lord" came to them (Micah 1:1; Zech. 8:1, et cetera), and it was this divine word or message—not their own—which they communicated to the people. If the word or message was rejected, it was said that the people had "despised the word of the Holy One of Israel." Isa. 5:24. Indeed, to reject God's word through His prophet was equivalent to rejecting the Lord Himself. 1 Sam. 8:1-10.

8. In what category did Peter place Paul's writings? 2 Peter 3:15, 16.

NOTE.—Different terms are used in the Bible to designate "the Word of the Lord." It is called the "Scripture" or "Scriptures" some fifty times in the New Testament.

The word *Bible* is a term frequently employed today when referring to the Scriptures, but this word is not actually used in the text of our English Bible. It derives from the Greek word *biblia,* which means "little books." The Bible is a collection of sacred books, a complete collection of essential spiritual knowledge.

9. What solemn charge did Paul give to Timothy? 2 Tim. 4:1, 2. Compare 1 Peter 1:25 (last part).

NOTE.—"Preach the word," said Paul to the young minister, Timothy. In apostolic days God's "Word," or message to men as recorded in the Old Testament canon of Scriptures, was the inspired point of reference in preaching the gospel of salvation through Christ. The entire Bible, as we know it today, did not exist when Paul's letters to Timothy were written. The New Testament writings appeared during the first century A.D., and soon came to be recognized by Christians as equally inspired with the Old Testament.

Inspired Nature of the Book

10. What does Paul say about the "inspiration" of the Scriptures? 2 Tim. 3:16 (first part).

NOTE.—"Inspiration of God" suggests the divine origin of the Scriptures. "Inspiration of God" means literally, "God breathed." The actual impartation of the divine revelation of truth came to the prophet under the Spirit's guidance and control. See Num. 12:6; Hosea 12:10; Rev. 1:10. The communication to the people of the light received by the prophet, was also directed by the Holy Spirit. See 2 Peter 1:21; Rev. 1:2, 11.

The Spirit of God also operates to aid the reader in his study of the truth thus revealed (John 14:26; 15:26). But this kind of Spirit-aided guidance, or illumination, is not equivalent to prophetic inspiration.

11. What great benefits accrue from the sincere study of God's Book? 2 Tim. 3:15; 1 Peter 1:23.

Dimensions of God's Book

12. Name four "profitable" dimensions of the Bible. 2 Tim. 3:16 (last part).

NOTE.—Four dimensions of the Bible mentioned by Paul satisfy four specific areas of man's spiritual and intellectual need. God's Word is "profitable" for: (1) *doctrine,* that is, imparting knowledge about the teachings of the Christian faith; (2) *reproof,* that is, reprimanding sin and censuring unlawful acts; (3) *correction,*

that is, refuting perverted and erroneous teaching; (4) *instruction*, that is, "resetting the direction of a man's life and training him in good living." Phillips.

13. Through the instruction of the Scriptures, to what heights of spiritual experience may men attain? 2 Tim. 3:17. Compare Eph. 4:13-15.

NOTE.—"As a child is taught the basic responsibilities of manhood, so the Christian finds in the Scriptures those principles that will help him to grow up to the 'perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ' (Eph. 4:13). This process of growing up to be like Christ is known as sanctification, a training that continues throughout life."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on 2 Tim. 3:16.

14. What safeguards are presented in God's Word? Ps. 119:11, 104.

NOTE.—"Every promise in God's Word is ours. 'By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God' are we to live. When assailed by temptation, look not to circumstances or to the weakness of self, but to the power of the Word. All its strength is yours. 'Thy Word,' says the psalmist, 'have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.' 'By the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.' Ps. 119:11; 17:4."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 123.

Lesson 3, for October 18, 1969

Searching the Scriptures

MEMORY VERSE: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Acts 17:11.

STUDY HELPS: "Education," pages 185-192; "Early Writings," page 88; "Gospel Workers," pages 302, 303, 152; "Testimonies," Vol. 2, pp. 650, 651, 692; Vol. 5, p. 708; Vol. 6, p. 131; "SDA Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To discover helpful methods of Bible reading and study that will bring the most spiritual benefits into the personal life and experience.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Adequacy of Biblical Revelation

1. A complete spiritual food. Deut. 8:3 (last part); Matt. 4:4.
2. One part supports another. Dan. 9:2.

II. Approaching the Sacred Text

3. With a prayer for guidance. 1 Sam. 23:1-5.
4. With a deep longing to understand. Ps. 119:18-20.
5. With a willingness to share. Isa. 21:11, 12.
6. With the spirit of obedience. 1 Kings 22:14.
7. A grave danger. Prov. 16:25.

III. Methods for Bible Reading

8. Telescopic. Deut. 31:10-13; 11:18-21.
9. Microscopic. Acts 8:26-38.
10. Daily, diligent Bible reading. Acts 17:11.
11. Compare scripture with scripture. 1 Cor. 2:9-13.

IV. Key to the Kingdom

12. The key is the Word itself. Matt. 16:19.
13. Misuse of the key. 2 Peter 3:16 (last part).

THE LESSON

Introduction

"We should exert all the powers of the mind in the study of the Scriptures and should task the understanding to comprehend, as far as mortals can, the deep things of God; yet we must not forget that the docility and submission of a child is the true spirit of the learner. Scriptural difficulties can never be mastered by the same methods that are employed in grappling with philosophical problems. We should not engage in the study of the Bible with that self-reliance with which so many enter the domains of science, but with a prayerful dependence upon God and a sincere desire to learn His will. We must come with a humble and teachable spirit to obtain knowledge from the great I AM. Otherwise, evil angels will so blind our minds and harden our hearts that we shall not be impressed by the truth."—*The Great Controversy,* page 599.

Adequacy of Biblical Revelation

1. How is man's spiritual life sustained? Deut. 8:3 (last part); Matt. 4:4.

NOTE.—"The Bible contains all the principles that men need to understand in order to be fitted either for this life or for the life to come. And these principles may be understood by all. No one with a spirit to appreciate its teaching can read a single passage from the Bible without gaining from it some helpful thought."—*Education,* page 123.

2. How did one Bible writer reveal his confidence in the writings of another prophet? Dan. 9:2. Compare Jer. 25:11-14; Ezra 1:1.

NOTE.—"Daniel searched the portion of the Old Testament which he had at his command, and made the Word of God his highest instructor."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education,* page 358.

Approaching the Sacred Text

3. When David needed special guidance, what did he do? How did the Lord respond? 1 Sam. 23:1-5. Compare 1 Sam. 10:22.

NOTE.—When we desire to know the way of the Lord, we should go as a church or as individuals to the Word, for we shall find safe guidance there. A good Bible concordance is a great help, and the spirit of prophecy was given to the church in the last days as an inspired Bible commentary. Here our minds are attracted to the Scripture and to its teachings, so that we may learn the meaning of God's Word and to reverence and obey the Lord.

4. For what did the psalmist pray? Ps. 119:18-20.

NOTE.—"The Bible should never be studied without prayer. The Holy Spirit alone can cause us to feel the importance of those things easy to be understood, or prevent us from wresting truths difficult of comprehension. It is the office of heavenly angels to prepare the heart so to comprehend God's Word that we shall be charmed with its beauty, admonished by its warnings, or animated and strengthened by its promises. We should make the psalmist's petition our own, 'Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law.' Psalm 119:18."—*The Great Controversy,* pages 599, 600.

5. What inquiry was made of Israel's watchmen? What reply was given? Isa. 21:11, 12.

NOTE.—"God's watchmen upon the walls of Zion today should be ready to give an answer to those who inquire what hour of earth's long night it is, and when the dawn of eternal day may be expected."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on Isa. 21:12.

6. What spirit did the prophets manifest in receiving and communicating God's truth to the people? 1 Kings 22:14. Compare Num. 22:38; Jer. 1:7.

NOTE.—The spirit shown by the prophets in humbly receiving and communicating the messages God gave to them should be seen in the churches today among all believers. The Bible should be searched in an effort to find the truth on a given subject but not to prove and promote pet theories. See *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students,* pages 341, 463. The world needs the messages of God in the Book, not the theories and twisted ideas of worldly philosophers and false teachers.

7. What danger does the wise man point out? Prov. 16:25.

NOTE.—"Ignorance is no excuse for error or sin, when there is every opportunity to know the will of God. A man is traveling and comes to a place where there are several roads and a guideboard indicating where each one leads. If he disregards the guideboard, and takes whichever road seems to him to be right, he may be ever so sincere, but will in all probability find himself on the wrong road.

"God has given us His Word that we may become acquainted with its teachings, and know for ourselves what He requires of us."—*The Great Controversy,* pages 597, 598.

Methods for Bible Reading

8. In what manner was the Word of God brought to Israel in ancient times? Deut. 31:10-13; 11:18-21. Compare Ezra 7:6, 10; Neh. 8:1-8, 18.

NOTE.—"Every seventh year the whole law was to be read in the assembly of all Israel, as Moses commanded."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 503.

"Not alone the men of Israel, but 'all the women and the little ones' listened to the reading of the law."—*Ibid.*

Ezra and the associate Levites read the Torah, or the five books of Moses, to the people of God who gathered at Jerusalem in connection with the Feast of Trumpets (*Prophets and Kings,* page 661). The readings continued for many days, so keen was the interest and desire of the people to know God's will.

There is a certain advantage to the reading of God's Word in sweeping, panoramic sequences, whether privately, in family worship, or in study groups. This method of study might be called "the telescopic method," taking a lengthy, grand sweep of the Bible, reading one book after another in order.

9. How did the Ethiopian eunuch study the prophets? Acts 8:26-38.

NOTE.—The eunuch sought to understand of whom the inspired writer spoke. Philip explained to him that it was Jesus, showing that Isaiah 53 pointed to the suffering Messiah. The eunuch believed and was baptized. By a careful study of each portion of the chapter he was led to the light. This verse-by-verse Bible study is the best method and has been called "the microscopic method." There is also the "topical" or "subject" approach, for which a good concordance or Bible subject guide is helpful.

10. How did the Bereans read the Bible? Acts 17:11.

NOTE.—The noble Bereans read the Word of God "daily." Theirs was not a hasty or occasional or disconnected study.

God has given to some men and women the gift of opening the Scriptures to others. The labors of these men and women should be respected. But no living human being is to be considered an infallible interpreter. The Bible explains itself, and we should study it for ourselves and not read it through the spectacles of others.

11. What promise is made to those who love the Lord? 1 Cor. 2:9-13.

NOTE.—"The mind will enlarge, if it is employed in tracing out the relation of the

subjects of the Bible, comparing scripture with scripture, and spiritual things with spiritual. Go below the surface; the richest treasures of thought are waiting for the skillful and diligent student."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education,* page 127.

Key to the Kingdom

12. What did Jesus give to Peter? Matt. 16:19. Compare Matt. 18:18; John 20:22, 23.

NOTE.—"The 'keys' to the kingdom of heaven are the words of Christ (see DA 413; cf. John 1:12; 17:3). It is important to note that Christ Himself speaks of the 'key' here referred to as 'the key of knowledge' of how to enter the kingdom (see Luke 11:52). The words of Jesus are 'spirit' and 'life' to all who receive them (see John 6:63). It is the words of Christ that bring eternal life (see John 6:68). The Word of God is the key to the new-birth experience (1 Peter 1:23). . . .

"Christ simply bestowed upon Peter and all the other disciples (see on Matt. 18:18; John 20:23) the authority and power to bring men into the kingdom. It was Peter's perception of the truth that Jesus is indeed the Christ that placed the keys' of the kingdom in his possession and let him into the kingdom, and the same may be said of all Christ's followers to the very close of time."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on Matt. 16:19.

13. What did Peter say that the unlearned and unstable had done with Paul's writings? 2 Peter 3:16 (last part).

NOTE.—"If men would but take the Bible as it reads, if there were no false teachers to mislead and confuse their minds, a work would be accomplished that would make angels glad and that would bring into the fold of Christ thousands upon thousands who are now wandering in error."—*The Great Controversy,* page 599.

"I take the Bible just as it is, as the Inspired Word. I believe its utterances in an entire Bible."—*Selected Messages,* Bk. 1, p. 17.

Lesson 4, for October 25, 1969

The Two Books of God

MEMORY VERSE: "How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with Thee." Ps. 139:17, 18.

STUDY HELPS: "Christ's Object Lessons," page 24; "Education," pages 128-134; "The Ministry of Healing," pages 458-466; "Testimonies," Vol. 8, pp. 255-279, 326; "SDA Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To discover ways in which nature and revelation "bear the impress of the same master mind and speak in harmony."

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Divine Character of the Scriptures

1. God's Word pure and true. Ps. 119:105, 140, 160; John 17:17.
2. A divine test. Isa. 8:19, 20; 1 Tim. 6:20; Col. 2:8.

II. God Speaks Through Natural Things

3. In the voice of nature. Ps. 19:1, 2; 8:3, 4.
4. In things that are made. Rom. 1:19, 20.
5. Figures of speech not to be construed literally. Isa. 11:12 (last part); Rev. 7:1 (first part).

III. Testimony of Nature and Scripture

6. The Creator's power revealed in nature. Ps. 33:6-9; Gen. 1:3, 6, 9.
7. God's Word interprets nature. Matt. 6:25-34.

IV. Mysteries in Both Books

8. Infinite power and wisdom. Job 42:1-6.
9. One reason why the Sadducees erred. Matt. 22:23, 29.
10. God revealed in Christ. Heb. 1:1-3.

V. Study With Divine Guidance

11. Promise of the Spirit's help. John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13.
12. Remember the intruder! Gen. 3:1-6.
13. A prayer for today. Ps. 119:18.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"Since the book of nature and the Book of revelation bear the impress of the same master mind, they cannot but speak in harmony. By different methods, and in different languages, they witness to the same great truths. Science is ever discovering new wonders; but she brings from her research nothing that, rightly understood, conflicts with divine revelation. The book of nature and the Written Word shed light upon each other. They make us acquainted with God by teaching us something of the laws through which He works."—*Education,* page 128.

Divine Character of the Scriptures

1. What is the Word of God said to be? Ps. 119:105, 140, 160; John 17:17.

NOTE.—"He who has a knowledge of God and His Word through personal experience has a settled faith in the divinity of the Holy Scriptures. He has proved that God's Word is truth, and he knows that truth can never contradict itself. He does not test the Bible by men's ideas of science; he brings these ideas to the test of the unerring standard."—*The Ministry of Healing,* page 462.

2. Whom are men to consult, and against what are they to be on guard? Isa. 8:19, 20; 1 Tim. 6:20; Col. 2:8.

NOTE.—"In these days of peril we are not to accept everything that men bring to us as truth. . . . The Word of God gives us a test whereby we may know what is truth. The prophet says, 'To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.' (Isa. 8:20).

"From this statement it is evident that it becomes us to be diligent Bible students, that we may know what is according to the law and the testimony. We are safe in no other course of action."—*Selected Messages,* Bk. 2, p. 99.

God Speaks Through Natural Things

3. What sources teach important knowledge? Ps. 19:1, 2; 8:3, 4.

NOTE.—"Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge." Ps. 19:2, RSV. Correctly understood, all Biblical observations touching the operation of natural law in earth and sky are in harmony with true scientific findings.

4. How is the power and Godhead of the Creator revealed? Rom. 1:19, 20. Compare Isa. 40:26.

NOTE.—The power, wisdom, love, and glory of God are revealed through His creation. And "all true science is but an interpretation of the handwriting of God in the material world."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 599.

5. What figure of speech is employed with reference to the earth? Isa. 11:12 (last part); Rev. 7:1 (first part).

NOTE.—The expression "four corners of the earth" is a figure of speech. But in medieval times theologians interpreted these scriptures literally and taught that the earth was flat and had corners! Not until navigators and astronomers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries exposed this error and established the fact that the earth is spherical was this false view abandoned. In this instance, scientific truth led the theologians, eventually, to correct a false interpretation. Science often brings help from the book of nature to enlighten the children of God.

This and other theological errors account, in part, for the fact that scientists came to regard the Bible as unreliable and unauthoritative. Though this reaction was almost as unreasonable as the erroneous Biblical interpretations, it nevertheless points up the urgent importance of sound Bible scholarship. Satan uses erroneous views to prejudice minds against the truths of the Word and to destroy souls. Wrote Ellen White:

"It is true that many theories and doctrines popularly supposed to be derived from the Bible have no foundation in its teaching, and indeed are contrary to the whole tenor of inspiration. These things have been a cause of doubt and perplexity to many minds. They are not, however, chargeable to God's Word, but to man's perversion of it."—*Steps to Christ,* pages 108, 109.

Testimony of Nature and Scripture

6. By whose word did all things in heaven and earth spring forth? Ps. 33: 6-9; Gen. 1:3, 6, 9. Compare John 1:1-3, 14.

NOTE.—"The work of creation can never be explained by science. What science can explain the mystery of life?

"The theory that God did not create matter when He brought the world into existence is without foundation. In the formation of our world, God was not indebted to preexisting matter. On the contrary, all things, material or spiritual, stood up before the Lord Jehovah at His voice and were created for His own purpose. The heavens and all the host of them, the earth and all things therein, are not only the work of His hand; they came into existence by the breath of His mouth." —*Testimonies,* Vol. 8, pp. 258, 259.

7. How did Jesus illumine nature and correctly interpret its lessons? Matt. 6:25-34.

NOTE.—The words of Christ, whether spoken directly by Himself or by His prophets, are the key to unlock nature's lessons, and nature in turn throws light on the Bible.

Mysteries in Both Books

8. What does Job say concerning the Creator's knowledge and power? Job 42:1-6. Compare Col. 2:2 (last part), 3.

NOTE.—"Skeptics refuse to believe in God because with their finite minds they cannot comprehend the infinite power by which He reveals Himself to men. But God is to be acknowledged more from what He does not reveal of Himself than from that which is open to our limited comprehension. Both in divine revelation and in nature, God has given to men mysteries to command their faith. This must be so. We may be ever searching, ever inquiring, ever learning, and yet there is an infinity beyond."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 8, p. 261.

9. Why did the Sadducees err in their religious understanding? Matt. 22:23, 29.

NOTE.—"Because they cannot fathom all its mysteries, the skeptic and the infidel reject God's Word; and not all who profess to believe the Bible are free from danger on this point. The apostle says, 'Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.' Hebrews 3:12. It is right to study closely the teach-

ings of the Bible and to search into 'the deep things of God' so far as they are revealed in Scripture. 1 Corinthians 2:10. While 'the secret things belong unto the Lord our God,' 'those things which are revealed belong unto us.' Deuteronomy 29:29."—*Steps to Christ,* page 108.

10. What do the Scriptures say concerning the revelation of God in Christ? Heb. 1:1-3.

NOTE.—Appearing on earth as "the express image" of the Father's person, Christ represented God in His totality—His personal being, His character, His power, His love, His wisdom, and His justice. The revelation of God in the incarnation of Christ and in the Scriptures was essential. Nature unaided could not reveal Him to perfection.

Study With Divine Guidance

11. Whom has God appointed to aid in the study of truth? John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13.

NOTE.—"As the works of God are studied, the Holy Spirit flashes conviction into the mind. It is not the conviction that logical reasoning produces; but unless the mind has become too dark to know God, the eye too dim to see Him, the ear too dull to hear His voice, a deeper meaning is grasped, and the sublime, spiritual truths of the Written Word are impressed on the heart."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* page 24.

12. How did Satan in the beginning interpose to destroy confidence in God and His word? Gen. 3:1-6.

NOTE.—"Satan addressed her [Eve] with a question that looked innocent but was full of cunning. . . . Satan intended that his words should be indefinite and ambiguous. His purpose was obvious. He wished to sow doubt in the heart of the woman concerning the real phraseology and the exact meaning of the divine commandment, especially concerning the reasonableness and justice of such a command."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on Gen. 3:1.

Satan's subtle question was designed to make the word of God and the testimony of nature ambiguous and vague to our first parents. So he works today, introducing questions of doubt and uncertainty to unsettle the faith of young and old in divine revelation.

13. What request did the psalmist make? Ps. 119:18. Compare Ps. 139: 17, 18 (first part).

NOTE.—This is really a prayer for divine guidance in the understanding of all the truth in God's great storehouse and treasury of truth, scientific discoveries as well as the truths clearly taught in the Bible.

Lesson 5, for November 1, 1969

The Sure Word of Prophecy

MEMORY VERSE: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise in your hearts." 2 Peter 1:19.

STUDY HELPS: "Education," pages 173-184; "The Great Controversy," chapters 18, 19; "SDA Bible Dictionary," pages 882, 883; "SDA Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: (1) To uncover the prophetic character of certain parts of the Scriptures. (2) To discover the basic principles of prophetic interpretation.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Bible a Book of Predictive Prophecy

1. The first and last prophecies. Gen. 3:15; Rev. 22:20.
2. The last book a prophecy of the future. Rev. 1:1.
3. A study of Daniel and the Revelation commended. Matt. 24:15; Rev. 1:3.

II. Dependability of Bible Prophecy

4. The prophetic Word made sure. 2 Peter 1:19.
5. The prophets "moved" by God's Spirit. 2 Peter 1:21.
6. The prophets study the prophets. 1 Peter 1:10.
7. The Spirit of Christ in the prophets. 1 Peter 1:11, 12.
8. Established in "present truth." 2 Peter 1:12 (last part).

III. Basic Principles of Prophetic Interpretation

9. The Bible its own expositor. 1 Cor. 2:12, 13.
10. No private interpretation. 2 Peter 1:20.
11. Interpreting figurative prophecies. Daniel 2; 7 to 9; Revelation 10 to 14.
12. Wisdom for those who ask. Deut. 29:29.
13. Progressive revelation of truth. James 1:5-8.

THE LESSON

Introduction

The word "prophecy" as used in the Bible, *e.g.*, Rom. 12:6, refers to every message from God, whatever its nature. In a more limited sense the word is commonly used in referring to predictions of future events.

"Scripture plainly presents prediction as a manifestation of God's power glorifying His Person, exalting His redemptive work in Christ and setting forth the divine character of His revealed Word. The words of fulfilled prophecies with regard to the first advent of Christ speak of the wisdom and power of God in interposing for man's need. Scripture not only presents the prophetic word as a demonstration of God's power and wisdom but His response to man's need. Since man is ignorant of what a day may bring forth, the revelation of not only God's will for the present but the disclosure of His plans and purposes for the future are of inestimable benefit to the believer. In the light of these facts, widespread neglect of Biblical prophecy is not only tragic but inexcusable."—*Unger's Bible Dictionary,* page 894.

The Bible a Book of Predictive Prophecy

1. Locate the first and the last prophecies in the Holy Scriptures. Gen. 3:15; Rev. 22:20.

NOTE.—The first predictive prophecy found in the first book of the Bible, Genesis, foretells the first advent of Christ and Christ's smiting of the serpent's head by means of His victory on the cross. The predictive prophecies of the last book of the Bible forecast the second coming of Christ, the day of the Lord, and the deliverence of the saints. Between Genesis and Revelation are to be found hundreds of prophetic predicitions which (1) have meaning today, (2) have met fulfillment in the past, or (3) will be fulfilled in the future.

2. What words introduce the prophetic book of Revelation? Rev. 1:1.

NOTE.—"The book of Revelation opens to the world what has been, what is, and what is to come; it is for our instruction upon whom the ends of the world are come. It should be studied with reverential awe." —Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary,* Vol. 7, p. 954.

3. What is said of those who read the books of Daniel and the Revelation? Matt. 24:15; Rev. 1:3.

NOTE.—"When the books of Daniel and Revelation are better understood, believers will have an entirely different religious experience. . . .

"One thing will certainly be understood from the study of Revelation—that the connection between God and His people is close and decided."—*Testimonies to Ministers,* page 114.

Dependability of Bible Prophecy

4. What word of confidence did Peter express? 2 Peter 1:19.

5. How were the prophecies of the Scriptures given? 2 Peter 1:21.

NOTE.—The Old Testament and the New Testament prophets were "moved" by the Holy Ghost. In Acts 27:15, 17 Luke uses the same word of a ship being driven before the wind. "The prophets were borne along by the Spirit as a ship is borne along by a wind. They were entirely under the Spirit's motivation."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on 2 Peter 1:21.

6. What did the prophets seek to know? 1 Peter 1:10.

NOTE.—"*Enquired.* Or, 'sought out,' a reference to the diligent study by the prophets of divine utterances, doubtless their own along with those of their fellow prophets, particularly with respect to the coming of the Redeemer. The possession of the prophetic gift does not imply full and complete knowledge on all matters. The prophet knows only that which God has revealed to him, and only this is he permitted to set forth as a 'Thus saith the Lord.' Since the messages to one prophet often complement those given to others, it becomes necessary to compare the various revelations in order to get a balanced and comprehensive view of the messages from Heaven. This the ancient prophets did."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on 1 Peter 1:10.

7. Whose Spirit was operating in the prophets? 1 Peter 1:11, 12.

NOTE.—"What a lesson to the people of God in the Christian age, for whose benefit these prophecies were given to His servants! 'Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister.' Witness those holy men of God as they 'inquired and searched diligently' concerning revelations given them for generations that were yet unborn. Contrast their holy zeal with the listless unconcern with which the favored ones of later ages treat this gift of Heaven. What a rebuke to the ease-loving, world-loving indifference which is content to declare that the prophecies cannot be understood!"—*The Great Controversy,* page 344.

8. In what did Peter say those to whom he was writing were established? 2 Peter 1:12 (last part).

NOTE.—The "present truth" is the truth possessed by the church at any given time in church history—the revealed truth for that time. In apostolic times, the recent first advent of Jesus—His coming, His life, His death, and His resurrection—constituted "present truth" for that era. These events had fulfilled a host of Old Testament predictions. In our day, the three angels' messages, which include the gospel of the first advent and of the imminence of the second advent, are "present truth."

Basic Principles of Prophetic Interpretation

9. What principle is stated by Paul? 1 Cor. 2:12, 13.

NOTE.—A dozen principles of interpretation are stated in the following inspired paragraph. Can you locate them?

"The Bible is its own expositor. Scripture is to be compared with scripture. The student should learn to view the Word as a whole, and to see the relation of its parts. He should gain a knowledge of its grand central theme, of God's original purpose for the world, of the rise of the great controversy, and of the work of redemption. He should understand the nature of the two principles that are contending for supremacy, and should learn to trace their working through the records of history and prophecy, to the great consummation. He should see how this controversy enters into every phase of human experience; how in every act of life he himself reveals the one or the other of the two antagonistic motives; and how, whether he will or not, he is even now deciding upon which side of the controversy he will be found."—*Education,* page 190.

10. What does Peter say about prophecy? 2 Peter 1:20.

NOTE.—Peter here declares that no Bible prophecy reflects the private opinion of the prophet; as he hastens to state, these holy men of old were moved by the Holy Ghost as they wrote. Surely, if those who wrote the Bible were not permitted to inject their own ideas into it, we who read what they wrote have no right to inject our private ideas into a passage of Scripture and then claim for our private ideas the authority of Scripture.

11. What figurative prophecies were given in the Old and New Testaments to delineate world events with relationship to the close of time? Daniel 2; 7 to 9; Revelation 10 to 14.

NOTE.—The great nations of antiquity were represented by the metallic image of Daniel 2, also by the four figurative beasts of Daniel 7. Ellen White wrote: "The language of the Bible should be explained according to its obvious meaning, unless a symbol or figure is employed."—*The Great Controversy,* page 599.

12. To whom do the revelations of God belong? Deut. 29:29.

NOTE.—"We may not, in this life, be able to explain the meaning of every passage of Scripture; but there are no vital points of practical truth that will be clouded in mystery. When the time shall come, in the providence of God, for the world to be tested upon the truth for that time, minds will be exercised by His Spirit to search the Scriptures, even with fasting and with prayer, until link after link is searched out and united in a perfect chain. Every fact which immediately concerns the salvation of souls will be made so clear that none need err or walk in darkness."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 2, p. 692.

13. What instruction given by James with respect to wisdom for meeting trials is valid also in asking for wisdom to understand the Bible? James 1:5-8.

NOTE.—"Those who are teaching the most solemn message ever given to the world, should discipline the mind to comprehend its significance. The theme of redemption will bear the most concentrated study, and its depth will never be fully explored. You need not fear that you will exhaust this wonderful theme. Drink deep of the well of salvation. Go to the fountain for yourself, that you may be filled with refreshment, that Jesus may be in you a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life. Only Bible truth and Bible religion will stand the test of the judgment."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education,* page 127.

"Those who rejoice in the precious light of truth should feel a burning desire to have it sent everywhere." —*Counsels on Stewardship,* page 42.

Lesson 6, for November 8, 1969

The Historical Bible

MEMORY VERSE: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Rom. 15:4.

STUDY HELPS: "Education," pages 146-158, 51-70; "Patriarchs and Prophets," pages 44-51, 90-104; "Fundamentals of Christian Education," pages 84, 85; "SDA Bible Dictionary," pages 230-234, 342, 343, 354-358, 473-480.

STUDY AIM: To discover the relevancy for today of the historical Biblical record.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. A True Record of Creation

1. Our world "in the beginning." Gen. 1:1-5, 31; 2:1-4.
2. The origin of man. Gen. 1:27; 2:7; 5:1, 2; Luke 3:38.
3. Jesus affirms creation story. Mark 10:6-8.

II. An Accurate Record of Human Catastrophes

4. The catastrophe of man's fall. Gen. 2:15-17; 3:1-7, 22-24.
5. The Noachian Deluge. Gen. 6:5-8, 17, 13, 14; 7:1, 11-13, 17-24; 8:15-19.

III. A Comprehensive View of History

6. God's purpose for the races of men. Acts 17:24-30.
7. Object of human governments. Dan. 4:10-12, 20-22, 27.
8. End of a rebellious empire. Jer. 51:12, 13, 63, 64; Isa. 13:19; 14:22, 23.
9. Final overthrow of earthly dominions. Dan 2:44; 7:27.
10. Reliability of God's Word; for our learning. John 17:17; Rom. 15:4.

IV. The Future in God's Hand

11. Certainty assured for Israel. Ezek. 12:27, 28.
12. Solemn events ahead. Matt. 24:6, 7.
13. Enduring quality of God's Word. 1 Peter 1:24, 25.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"We are dependent on the Bible for a knowledge of the early history of our world, of the creation of man, and of his fall. Remove the Word of God, and what can we expect than to be left to fables and conjectures, and to that enfeebling of the intellect which is the sure result of entertaining error. We need the authentic history of the origin of the earth, of the fall of the covering cherub, and of the introduction of sin into our world. Without the Bible, we should be bewildered by false theories. The mind would be subjected to the tyranny of superstition and falsehood. But having in our possession an authentic history of the beginning of our world, we need not hamper ourselves with human conjectures and unreliable theories." —*Medical Ministry*, page 89.

A True Record of Creation

1. What does the inspired historian say concerning our world "in the beginning"? Gen. 1:1-5, 31; 2:1-4. Compare Ps. 33:6, 9.

NOTE.—"Just how God accomplished the work of creation He has never revealed to men; human science cannot search out the secrets of the Most High. His creative power is as incomprehensible as His existence. . . .

"It may be innocent to speculate beyond what God's Word has revealed, if our theories do not contradict facts found in the Scriptures; but those who leave the Word of God, and seek to account for His created works upon scientific principles, are drifting without chart or compass upon an unknown ocean."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 113.

2. What does the Bible teach about the origin of man? Gen. 1:27; 2:7; 5:1, 2; Luke 3:38. Compare Eccl. 7:29.

NOTE.—"Akin to the theory concerning the evolution of the earth is that which attributes to an ascending line of germs, mollusks, and quadrupeds the evolution of man, the crowning glory of the creation.

"When consideration is given to man's opportunities for research; how brief his life; how limited his sphere of action; how restricted his vision; how frequent and how great the errors in his conclusions, especially as concerns the events thought to antedate Bible history; how often the supposed deductions of science are revised or cast aside; with what readiness the assumed period of the earth's development is from time to time increased or diminished by millions of years; and how the theories advanced by different scientists conflict with one another,—considering all this, shall we, for the privilege of tracing our descent from germs and mollusks and apes, consent to cast away that statement of Holy Writ, so grand in its simplicity, 'God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him'? Genesis 1:27. Shall we reject that genealogical record,—prouder than any treasured in the courts of kings,—'which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God'? Luke 3:38."—*Education,* page 130.

3. How did Jesus affirm the truth of the Mosaic record of man's creation? Mark 10:6-8. Compare Gen. 1:27, 28; 2:22-25.

NOTE.—"Neither evolution nor special creation of basic types can be demonstrated in the laboratory. This situation has existed as far back as authentic records extend. Therefore, the scientists (and many famous names appear here) who are asserting today that evolution of new basic types is as completely demonstrated as is the shape of our earth are completely wrong. If they would be truthful they would have to say, 'We cannot *prove* in the laboratory that evolution of new basic types has occurred, or is occurring, but *we believe* such to be the case.' "—Frank L. Marsh, *Evolution or Special Creation?* page 4.

An Accurate Record of Human Catastrophes

4. What great catastrophe befell man in the Garden of Eden? Gen. 2:15-17; 3:1-7, 22-24. Compare Romans 5:12, 21; 1 Cor. 15:21, 22.

NOTE.—According to Bible history a succession of falls and curses have occurred on the earth.

"The first curse was pronounced upon the posterity of Adam and upon the earth, because of disobedience. The second curse came upon the ground after Cain slew his brother Abel. The third most dreadful curse from God, came upon the earth at the Flood."—*Spiritual Gifts,* Vol. 4, p. 121.

5. What calamity overtook the world in Noah's day? Gen. 6:5-8, 17, 13, 14; 7:1, 11-13, 17-24; 8:15-19.

NOTE.—"Apart from Bible history, geology can prove nothing. . . . In the history of the Flood, inspiration has explained that which geology alone could never fathom. In the days of Noah, men, animals, and trees, many times larger than now exist, were buried, and thus preserved as an evidence to later generations that the antediluvians perished by a flood. God designed that the discovery of these things should establish faith in inspired history; but men, with their vain reasoning, fall into

the same error as did the people before the Flood—the things which God gave them as a benefit, they turn into a curse by making a wrong use of them."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 112.

A Comprehensive View of History

6. What does Paul say of the creation of the world and man and of the distribution of nations? Acts 17: 24-30.

NOTE.—"Paul is stating the historical truth that all men, and consequently all nations, sprang from one common ancestor, Adam. . . . But there was no place in Paul's theology for a 'superior' race. He believed the Genesis account of the creation of man. He saw the oneness of physical structure, of potential or actual development, which forbids any one race or nation —Hebrew, Hellenic, Latin, or Teutonic—to assume that it is the cream and flower of humanity. Compare Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11, where Paul stresses the unity achieved through belief in Christ. The Christian is doubly obligated to recognize the oneness of men—through creation and through salvation."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on Acts 17:26.

7. What impressive dream did King Nebuchadnezzar have, and what did Daniel say it signified? Dan. 4:10-12, 20-22, 27. Compare 2 Sam. 23:3, 4.

NOTE.—"To Nebuchadnezzar the king the true object of national government was represented under the figure of a great tree. . . . This representation shows the character of a government that fulfills God's purpose—a government that protects and upbuilds the nation.

"God exalted Babylon that it might fulfill this purpose. Prosperity attended the nation until it reached a height of wealth and power that has never since been equaled—fitly represented in the Scriptures by the inspired symbol, a 'head of gold.' Dan. 2:38.

"But the king failed of recognizing the power that had exalted him. . . . To the ruler of Babylon came the sentence of the divine Watcher: 'O king, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee.' Dan. 4:31."—*Education,* pages 175, 176.

8. What was predicted concerning the latter end of Babylon? Jer. 51:12, 13, 63, 64; Isa. 13:19; 14:22, 23.

NOTE.—"Every nation that has come upon the stage of action has been permitted to occupy its place on the earth, that it might be seen whether it would fulfill the purpose of 'the Watcher and the Holy One.' Prophecy has traced the rise and fall of the world's great empires—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. With each of these, as with nations of less power, history repeated itself. Each had its period of test, each failed, its glory faded, its power departed, and its place was occupied by another."—*Education,* pages 176, 177.

9. In what language was the final overthrow of all earthly dominions foretold? Dan. 2:44; 7:27. Compare Ezek. 21:26, 27.

NOTE.—"The final overthrow of all earthly dominions is plainly foretold in the Word of truth. In the prophecy uttered when sentence from God was pronounced upon the last king of Israel is given the message: [Ezek. 21:26, 27 quoted]. That time is at hand."—*Education,* page 179.

10. What did Jesus say concerning God's Word? What reason is given for studying the Scriptures? John 17: 17; Rom. 15:4.

NOTE.—"Thy Word is truth." This is true of the historical records of the Bible as well as of its teachings. Whether the inspired writings deal with men as individuals

or with nations, the truth is told. There is no glossing over the record. Even the sins of God's servants and His judgments upon them are revealed. There are also strong archaeological proofs that the Biblical records are true.

"Many critical scholars admit today that the Bible has to be treated with greater respect since the archaeological evidence has shown how accurate its records are." —L. E. Froom, *Our Firm Foundation,* Vol. 1, pp. 62, 63.

The Future in God's Hand

11. What words of certainty concerning the fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecies did God speak to the house of Israel? Ezek. 12:27, 28.

NOTE.—"All that prophecy has foretold as coming to pass, until the present time, has been traced on the pages of history, and we may be assured that all which is yet to come will be fulfilled in its order." —*Education*, page 178.

12. What prophecy of international significance did Jesus give? Matt. 24: 6, 7.

13. For how long will God's Word endure? 1 Peter 1:24, 25.

NOTE.—"From the rise and fall of nations as made plain in the pages of Holy Writ, they need to learn how worthless is mere outward and worldly glory. Babylon, with all its power and its magnificence, the like of which our world has never since beheld,—power and magnificence which to the people of that day seemed so stable and enduring,—how completely has it passed away! As 'the flower of the grass' it has perished. So perishes all that has not God for its foundation. Only that which is bound up with His purpose and expresses His character can endure. His principles are the only steadfast things our world knows."—*Education*, page 183.

Lesson 7, for November 15, 1969

Conditional Prophecy

MEMORY VERSE: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" Rom. 11:33.

STUDY HELPS: Jonah 1 to 4; Isaiah 38, 39; "Prophets and Kings," pages 531-533, 551, 552; "Selected Messages," Bk. 2, p. 102; "Counsels on Sabbath School Work," page 23; "Testimonies," Vol. 2, pp. 147, 148; "SDA Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To ascertain the conditions upon which the promises and threatenings of the Scriptures are based.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Future Unfolded

1. Immutability of God's purposes. Prov. 19:21.
2. The shape of things to come. Isa. 46:9, 10.
3. Cyrus the deliverer. Isa. 44:24-28; 45:1-3.
4. The divine-human struggle. Dan. 10:1, 5-7, 12, 13, 18-21.
5. God's Word confirmed. Isa. 44:24, 25, 26 (first part).

II. Predicted Benefits Conditional on Obedience

6. Changed fulfillment resulting from disobedience. Jer. 18:9, 10.
7. Changed fulfillment resulting from obedience. Jer. 18:7, 8.

III. Examples of Threatenings Unfulfilled

8. The prophecy of Jonah. Jonah 3:1, 4.
9. No stated prospects of mercy. Jonah 3:4 (last part).
10. A revelation of God's character. Jonah 4:1, 2.
11. Reversal of a divine pronouncement. 2 Kings 20:1-6.
12. A promise postponed. Ex. 6:2-8; Num. 14:26-34.
13. A nation laid aside. Dan. 5:1-6, 25-28, 30, 31.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"God's Word is sure (Isa. 40:8; 55:11; Rom. 11:29), and His plan for the salvation of man will ultimately prevail (Isa. 46:10). With Him there is 'no variableness, neither shadow of turning' (James 1:17). He is 'the same yesterday, and today, and forever' (Heb. 13:8). His word 'endureth forever' (1 Peter 1:25). Eventually God's purposes will prevail and the plan of salvation will succeed, irrespective of the failure of any person or group (PK 705, 706). The plan itself never changes because God never changes. But the manner in which it is carried out may change because man may change. The fickle human will is the weak, unstable factor in conditional prophecy."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* Vol. 4, p. 34.

"It should be remembered that the promises and threatenings of God are alike conditional."—*Selected Messages,* Bk. 1, p. 67.

The Future Unfolded

1. How are the divine purposes contrasted with human plans? Prov. 19:21. Compare Heb. 6:17; Acts 5: 38, 39.

NOTE.—The Revised Standard Version renders Proverbs 19:21: "Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will be established." The author of Hebrews speaks of "the immutability of His counsel." Heb. 6:17. This means the "unchangeableness of His purpose" as contrasted with man's ambitious designs, his changing whims and fancies.

2. With regard to "things that are not yet done," what does the Lord do? Isa. 46:9, 10. Compare Isa. 44:6-8.

3. What was foretold concerning Cyrus? Isa. 44:24-28; 45:1-3.

NOTE.—"Cyrus was a 'shepherd' to the scattered flock of Israel, but a ravenous bird of prey to Babylon, the enemy of God's people. . . .

"God would one day deliver His people from Babylon, through Cyrus (ch. 45:13). The deliverance from Babylon is a type of the greater deliverance from sin accomplished through Christ.

"The Babylonian captivity was to be for a period of 70 years (Jer. 25:11, 12; 29:10), at the close of which the Jews were to return to their homeland under Cyrus' decree (2 Chron. 36:21-23; Ezra 1: 1-4)."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on Isa. 46:11.

4. What struggle ensued over the proclamation of Cyrus's decree for the return of the exiled Jews? Dan. 10:1, 5-7, 12, 13, 18-21.

NOTE.—"While Satan was striving to influence the highest powers in the kingdom of Medo-Persia to show disfavor to God's people, angels worked in behalf of

the exiles. The controversy was one in which all heaven was interested. Through the prophet Daniel we are given a glimpse of this mighty struggle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. For three weeks Gabriel wrestled with the powers of darkness, seeking to counteract the influences at work on the mind of Cyrus; and before the contest closed, Christ Himself came to Gabriel's aid. 'The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days,' Gabriel declares; 'but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.' Daniel 10:13. All that heaven could do in behalf of the people of God was done. The victory was finally gained; the forces of the enemy were held in check all the days of Cyrus, and all the days of his son Cambyses, who reigned about seven and a half years."—*Prophets and Kings,* pages 571, 572.

This incident reveals the hand of God in prophecy and history, yet the actors in the unfolding historic drama acted with freedom of choice and followed the course of their own action. They were not robots or machines moved by an irresistible force toward a certain predetermined goal. God's angels strove with Cyrus, urging a right decision, and eventually he chose to cooperate with the divine will.

5. How does God regard the word spoken through His prophetic messengers? Isa. 44:24, 25, 26 (first part). Compare Zech. 1:6.

NOTE.—God confirms the word of His servants and performs the counsels of His prophetic messengers. "He establishes the reliability of true prophets. Their predictions are fulfilled."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on Isa. 44:26. Even rebellious Israel had to concede that God's word concerning them had been fulfilled.

Predicted Benefits Conditional on Obedience

6. What conditional aspect is inherent in the Lord's promises to the children of men? Jer. 18:9, 10. Compare Deut. 28:1-15, 58, 63, 64.

NOTE.—The sad story of Israel's failure, captivity, and dispersion is the most poignant illustration in sacred history of how the divine principle enunicated in Jeremiah 18:9, 10 operates. If the conditions of loyalty and obedience to the divine law are not met by God's people, His blessings are withheld; indeed, His judgments will fall upon the disobedient. See Deut. 28:15-68. "The Jews were not to think that their role as God's chosen people assured them of continued divine favor, irrespective of whether or not they acted in harmony with the divine will."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on Jer. 18:10.

7. What hope is extended to a sinful people who repent of their evil deeds? Jer. 18:7, 8. Compare Ezek. 18:21; 1 Kings 21:27-29; 2 Chron. 34:24-28.

NOTE.—Prosperity or adversity may come to individuals, to cities, to states, dependent upon right or wrong attitudes toward God and His revealed will. Consider the mercies extended to wicked Ahab when he humbled himself before God; also, to King Josiah in spite of the perversity of his people.

"This is a moral universe, and . . . nations stand or fall according to their relationship to the moral law. If a nation conducts its affairs uprightly, following the precepts of justice and mercy, it 'shall prosper' (Ps. 1:3). If, on the other hand, it becomes tyrannical, gives itself wholly to the material and secular values of life, and disregards the norms of honest national and international dealing, it 'shall perish' (see Ps. 1:6)."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on Jer. 18:8.

Examples of Threatenings Unfulfilled

8. What warning of impending judgment did Jonah bring to the inhabitants of Nineveh? Jonah 3:1-4.

NOTE.—Wicked Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah (Jonah 3:5-10), and the fulfillment of the prophecy, "Yet forty

days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (Jonah 3:4), was postponed. The prediction might have been canceled altogether if the humbled Ninevites had forsaken their idolatry and persisted in obeying the true God.

9. Did the prophet Jonah's message, as recorded in Scripture, offer any stated prospect of divine mercy? Jonah 3:4 (last part).

NOTE.—"It is doubtful that Jonah had given any assurance of a possible reversal of the divine decree. His anger at the sparing of the city (ch. 4:1) indicates that he had not."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on Jonah 3:9.

10. What words in Jonah's prayer indicate that he had long understood God's mercy toward the erring? Jonah 4:1, 2.

NOTE.—Jonah understood conditional prophecy. He knew that all of God's dealings with men reflect His merciful character. He was more interested, however, in his own reputation—he did not want to be regarded as a false prophet—than in establishing the people of Nineveh in the true knowledge of God's love and goodness.

11. What reversal of a divine pronouncement occurred in the life of Hezekiah? 2 Kings 20:1-6.

NOTE.—"The normal course of the disease would bring certain death. The prophecy was a forecast of the results that would follow the circumstances as they existed at that time. With an alteration in circumstances the prediction was changed (see v. 5). Some prophetic predictions are not necessarily absolute but may be conditional."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on 2 Kings 20:1.

12. The fulfillment of what promise made to Abraham and Moses concerning ancient Israel was postponed because of the sins of the people? Ex. 6:2-8; Num. 14:26-34. Compare Gen. 15:16.

NOTE.—God's promise that Israel should proceed immediately into the land of Canaan in the fourth generation and thus fulfill His purpose for them, was altered—but not completely thwarted—by the unbelief and murmuring of the people. It was the fifth generation that Joshua led over Jordan.

13. Why did judgment come upon ancient Babylon? Dan. 5:1-6, 25-28, 30, 31.

NOTE.—"God may reject one nation or group of people in favor of another if those first summoned persistently refuse to cooperate with Him."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* Vol. 4, p. 34.

The advent people are subject to the divine principles of God's government. Some may lose their way and, in a time of great testing soon to come, leave the church, but those who remain faithful will triumph with the church and be among the redeemed.

For those who speak other languages, the senior "Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly" is available in the following languages: Armenian, Chinese, Croatian, Czech, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Slovak, Spanish, Swedish, Ukrainian, Yugoslav (Latin or Cyrillic type).

Prophecies Concerning Israel—I

MEMORY VERSE: "Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." Rom. 9:27.

STUDY HELPS: "Patriarchs and Prophets," pages 232, 447, 603; "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 9-16; "Testimonies," Vol. 6, pp. 9, 10; "SDA Bible Dictionary," article, "Israel," also pages 515-517, 8-11.

STUDY AIM: To understand: (1) God's destiny for Israel, ancient and spiritual, as revealed in Bible prophecy, and (2) the principles by which to interpret and apply these prophecies.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. God's Plan for Ancient Israel

1. The plan announced to Abraham. Gen. 12:1-3; 22:15-18.
2. The plan accepted by Israel. Ex. 19:1-8; 24:3-8.
3. Rules for Israel's monarchy. Deut. 17:14-20.
4. A happy, healthy society foreseen. Deut. 4:5-8.
5. A world-embracing witness. Deut. 26:19.
6. Opportunities for Israel's leaders. 1 Kings 10:1-9; 2 Kings 20:12-15.
7. God's purpose for Egypt and Assyria. Isa. 19:18-25.

II. Israel's Failure to Implement God's Plan

8. Why Israel was divided. 1 Kings 11:29-36.
9. How God was disappointed. Isa. 5:1-7.

III. Promises of Postexilic Glory

10. The covenant renewed. Jer. 31:31-34.
11. Promises of restoration. Jer. 50:4, 5, 17-19; Isa. 27:12, 13.

IV. Israel Confronts the Messiah

12. "His own received Him not." John 1:11.
13. Christ's death not in vain. Matt. 21:33-43.

THE LESSON

Introduction

In the messages of the Old Testament prophets are to be found guidance, comfort, and direction for the church today. Many of these prophecies concerned Israel; others applied to surrounding nations. In order rightly to understand the prophecies concerning Israel, certain simple rules need to be applied to each prophetic passage. If this understanding can be acquired, a major obstacle to a right understanding of the Bible will be removed. The following guidelines are helpful:

"1. Examine the prophecy in its entirety. Note by whom it was spoken, to whom it was addressed, and the circumstances that called it forth. Remember that—generally speaking—it was originally given with respect to the historical circumstance that called it forth. It was ordained of God to meet the needs of His people at the time it was given and to remind them of the glorious destiny that awaited them as a nation, of the coming of the Messiah, and of the establishment of His eternal kingdom. Discover what the message meant to the people of that time. . . .

"2. Observe the conditional aspects of the prediction and ascertain whether or not, or to what extent, the conditions were met.

"3. Discover what application later inspired writers make of the prophecy, and

on this basis determine its possible significance for God's people in this time.

"4. Remember that the record of God's dealings with His people in ages past has been recorded for the benefit of all later generations to the end of time. Our study of messages originally proclaimed by holy men of old to the people of their day is not to become an end in itself, but a means of discovering the will of God for all who would render Him truehearted service now, at the climax of the ages. The voice of God through the prophets distinctly speaks to us today."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* Vol. 4, p. 38.

God's Plan for Ancient Israel

1. Whom did God call to be the father of Israel, and "of all them that believe"? Gen. 12:1-3; 22:15-18. Compare Rom. 4:6-13.

NOTE.—"With the call of Abraham, God set in operation a definite plan for bringing the Messiah into the world and for presenting the gospel invitation to all men (Gen. 12:1-3; PP 125; PK 368). In Abraham God found a man ready to yield unqualified obedience to the divine will (Gen. 26:5; Heb. 11:8) and to cultivate a similar spirit in his posterity (Gen 18:19). Accordingly, Abraham became in a special sense the 'Friend of God' (James 2:23) and 'the father of all them that believe' (Rom. 4:11)."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* Vol. 4, p. 26.

2. How did Abraham's descendants respond to the divine call to enter into covenant relationship with God? Ex. 19:1-8; 24:3-8. Compare Deut. 7:6-14.

NOTE.—Israel as a nation promised to be obedient to God and to be the Lord's own special people, through whom He planned to make His truth known to the world. Thus Israel entered into a theocratic form of government directly under the divine leadership.

3. Later when Israel set up a monarchy, what precautions were to be observed? Deut. 17:14-20.

NOTE.—It was not until the leaders of Israel rejected the Messiah and declared that they had "no king but Caesar" (John 19:15) that Israel ceased to be a theocracy. "By choosing a heathen ruler, the Jewish nation had withdrawn from the theocracy. They had rejected God as their king. Henceforth they had no deliverer. They had no king but Caesar."—*The Desire of Ages,* pages 737, 738.

4. In what specific way did God intend to use Israel as His witness to the world? Deut. 4:5-8.

NOTE.—Israel was placed at the crossroads of the ancient world and equipped with every facility to become the greatest nation on the face of the earth. See *Christ's Object Lessons,* page 288. The Jews were to reveal to the heathen nations with whom they were surrounded a superiority in spiritual, intellectual, physical, cultural, and social growth. Israel's religious, governmental, and economic maturity was to stand out head and shoulders above the systems of pagan nations. Thus the results of Jehovah's laws and regulations were to be seen in a happy, healthy, and holy society of men. Jehovah's revealed will was to be manifest in His people as representing a God of love, mercy, justice, and truth.

5. What was to be Israel's position with respect to the nations? Deut. 26:19.

NOTE.—"Had Jerusalem known what it was her privilege to know, and heeded the light that Heaven sent her, she would have stood forth in magnificent prosperity, 'the queen of kingdoms,' 'the mighty metropolis of the earth' (DA 577), and would, like a noble vine, have filled 'the face of the world with fruit' (Isa. 27:6). 'Had Israel as a nation preserved her allegiance to Heaven, Jerusalem would have stood forever, the elect of God' (GC 19; cf. PK 46;

Jer. 7:7; 17:25)."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* Vol. 4, p. 30.

6. Illustrate how opportunities were provided for the rulers of Israel to witness for God, and with what results. 1 Kings 10:1-9; 2 Kings 20: 12-15.

NOTE.—Solomon revealed to the Queen of Sheba both the spiritual and material treasures of his realm, and she was left breathless by the spectacle. But Hezekiah revealed only the treasures of gold. In doing this he lost a glorious opportunity to give the light of truth to the leaders of Babylon.

7. What might have been the destiny of Egypt and Assyria? Isa. 19: 18-25. Compare Jer. 18:7-10.

Israel's Failure to Implement God's Plan

8. What circumstances led to Israel's becoming a divided monarchy? 1 Kings 11:29-36. Compare 1 Kings 12:1-16.

9. How did the Lord lament Israel's failure to carry out His plan? Isa. 5:1-7. Compare Isa. 27:2, 3, 6.

Promises of Postexilic Glory

10. While His people were in Babylonian captivity, what promise did God make to them? Jer. 31:31-34. Compare Ezek. 36:21-26; Zech. 1:12-17; 2:12.

11. What promises of restoration were made to Israel and Judah? Jer. 50:4, 5, 17-19; Isa. 27:12, 13.

NOTE.—These precious promises were to have "met fulfillment in large measure during the centuries following the return of the Israelites from the lands of their captivity. It was God's design that the whole earth be prepared for the first advent of Christ, even as today the way is preparing for His second coming."—*Prophets and Kings,* pages 703, 704.

"In spite of Israel's ultimate failure, a limited knowledge of the true God and of the Messianic hope was widespread when the Saviour was born (see on Matt. 2:1). If the nation had been faithful to its trust and had appreciated the high destiny reserved for it by God, the whole earth would have awaited the coming of the Messiah with eager expectancy. He would have come. He would have died, and would have risen again. Jerusalem would have become a great missionary center (COL 232), and the earth would have been set ablaze with the light of truth in one grand, final appeal to those who had not as yet accepted the invitation of divine mercy. God's call to the nations would have been, 'Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth' (Isa. 45:22)."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* Vol. 4, pp. 29, 30.

Israel Confronts the Messiah

12. When the Messiah appeared to save Israel, how did they regard Him? John 1:11.

NOTE.—"At the time of the Babylonian captivity God had specifically announced that that experience was not to mark 'a full end' of Israel as God's people (Jer. 4: 27; 5:18; 46:28). But when the Jews rejected Christ there was no such assurance of reinstatement. The present-day return of the Jews to Palestine and the establishment of the modern state of Israel do not imply such a reinstatement, either present or future. Whatever the Jews, as a nation, may do, now or in time to come, is in no way related to the former promises made to them. With the crucifixion of Christ they forever forfeited their special position as God's chosen people. Any idea that the return of the Jews to their ancestral home, that is, to the new state of Israel, may in any way be related to Bible prophecy is . . . without valid Scriptural

foundation."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 4, p. 33.

13. How will God's original plan for Israel be realized? Matt. 21:33-43. Compare 1 Peter 2:9, 10.

NOTE.—"The formal rejection of Jesus by the Jews, as a nation, marked the close of their last opportunity as the special agents of God for the salvation of the world. It was 'last of all' that God 'sent unto them His Son,' according to Christ's own words (Matt. 21:37), but they 'caught Him' and 'slew Him' (v. 39). Thereafter, God 'let out His vineyard [see Isa. 5:1-7] unto other husbandmen' who would 'render Him the fruits in their season.' . . . Upon His final departure from the sacred precincts of the Temple, Jesus said, 'Your house is left unto you desolate' (Matt. 23:38). The day before, He had called it 'My house' (ch. 21:13), but henceforth He no longer owned it as His. Jesus' own verdict was, 'The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.' "—*SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 4, p. 35.

What a lesson for Christians today! For we are the "nation" that God has called to "bring forth the fruits" that Israel should have borne.

Lesson 9, for November 29, 1969

Prophecies Concerning Israel—II

MEMORY VERSE: "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth." 2 Peter 1:12.

STUDY HELPS: "The Desire of Ages," pages 27-38; "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 593-602; "SDA Bible Commentary," Vol. 4, pp. 35, 36, and on lesson texts.

STUDY AIM: To seek a better understanding: (1) of God's destiny for Israel, ancient and spiritual, as revealed in Bible prophecy, and (2) of the principles by which to interpret and apply these prophecies.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Glimpses of Ancient Israel's Glory

1. Early witnesses for God. Deut. 34:7-12; 1 Sam. 3:19-21; Dan. 1:19-21.
2. The influence of David and Solomon. 1 Chron. 14:2, 17; 1 Kings 4:21-24, 29-34.

II. Place of the Christian Church

3. Messiah's coming foretold. Isa. 11:1; 53:1-9.
4. Israel's fate described. Matt. 22:2-10.
5. The gospel to all the world. Matt. 24:14.

III. Prophecies Fulfilled in Spiritual Israel

6. Abraham's seed identified. Gal. 3:29.
7. An illustration of a principle. Ezekiel 38; 39; Rev. 20:7-9.
8. A principle to remember. 1 Cor. 10:11.
9. Four prophetic categories. (1) Jeremiah 27; 28; (2) Isa. 9:6, 7; (3) Dan. 8:14; (4) Jer. 51:64.
10. Joel's prophecy applied. Acts 2:16, 17.

IV. Beware of False Prophets

11. Results of their work. 2 Peter 2:1-3.
12. Warning against misuse of Scripture. 2 Peter 3:16.

Introduction

"Seventh-day Adventists believe that, generally speaking, the promises and predictions given through the Old Testament prophets originally applied to literal Israel and were to have been fulfilled to them on the condition that they obey God and remain loyal to Him. But the Scriptures record the fact that they disobeyed God and proved disloyal to Him instead. Accordingly, what He purposed to do for the world through Israel of old He will finally accomplish through His church on earth today, and many of the promises originally made to Israel will be fulfilled to His remnant people at the close of time."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* Vol. 4, pp. 25, 26.

Glimpses of Ancient Israel's Glory

1. Who were some of the leaders through whom the Lord witnessed in ancient times? Deut. 34:7-12; 1 Sam. 3:19-21; Dan. 1:19-21.

NOTE.—The honor the nation of Israel failed to achieve was reached at times by individual Israelites who were faithful to God.

2. To what position of eminence did the Hebrew nation rise in the days of David and Solomon? 1 Chron. 14:2, 17; 1 Kings 4:21-24, 29-34.

Place of the Christian Church

3. Cite prophecies linked to the coming of the Messiah. Isa. 11:1; 53: 1-9.

NOTE.—"These repeated Messianic predictions were designed to lift the eyes of the people from the transitory events of their own time to the coming of Messiah and the establishment of His eternal kingdom, in order to afford them a view of the things of time in the light of eternity. However, these messages pertaining to the then-distant future were intended, not only to inspire patience, comfort, and hope in the day they were first given, but also to provide men of Christ's day with confirming evidence of His Messiahship. The profound conviction that the messages of the prophets had been fulfilled led many to believe in Christ as the Son of God (DA 775, 799). The prophets thus provided a firm foundation for the faith of the apostolic church and made a direct and vital contribution to the Christian faith."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* Vol. 4, p. 36.

4. By what parable did Jesus describe the fate of the nation that rejected Him? Matt. 22:2-10.

NOTE.—In parables Christ described Israel's rejection of Himself as the Messiah and the results of such rejection. "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Matt. 21:43. The Christian church henceforth would become God's instrument to save the world. See 1 Peter 2:9, 10.

5. How extensive will be the proclamation of the gospel? Matt. 24:14.

NOTE.—"The glorious promises originally made to literal Israel are meeting their fulfillment today in the proclamation of

> **"After the tithe is set apart, let gifts and offerings be apportioned, 'as God hath prospered' you."—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work,* page 130.**

the gospel to all men (PK 374, 375; GC 451; Rev. 14:6, 7). 'The blessings thus assured to Israel are, on the same conditions and in the same degree, assured to every nation and to every individual under the broad heavens' (PK 500, 501; cf. 298). 'The church in this generation has been endowed by God with great privileges and blessings, and He expects corresponding returns. . . . In the lives of God's people the truths of His Word are to reveal their glory and excellence. Through His people Christ is to manifest His character and the principles of His kingdom' (COL 296)."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* Vol. 4, pp. 35, 36.

Prophecies Fulfilled in Spiritual Israel

6. Through what means may men become Abraham's seed? Gal. 3:29. Compare Rom. 2:28, 29; 9:24-26.

NOTE.—"Paul emphasizes the fact that the rejection of literal Israel as God's chosen instrument for the salvation of the world does not mean that individual Jews can no longer be saved (chs. 9:6; 11:1, 2, 11 15), for he is a Jew himself (chs. 9:3; 10:1; 11:1, 2). But they are to be saved as Christians and not as Jews."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* Vol. 4, p. 35.

7. Cite an Old Testament prophecy concerning the future of Israel, and a New Testament text that reapplies Ezekiel's prediction. Ezek. 38; 39; Rev. 20:7-9.

NOTE.—"The prophecy of the battle of Gog and Magog in Ezekiel 38, 39 was never fulfilled in literal Israel; but John the revelator assures us that in principle, though not necessarily in all details (such as those of Eze. 39:9-15), this battle will occur at the close of the millennium (Rev. 20:7-9). . . . Where Inspiration has not thus clearly spoken it is our privilege to compare scripture with scripture in an endeavor to understand more perfectly the mind of the Spirit."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* Vol. 4, p. 37.

"The fundamental principle by which we can tell unerringly when any particular promise or prediction of the Old Testament made originally to literal Israel is to meet its fulfillment with respect to spiritual Israel is—*when a later inspired writer makes such an application of it.*"—*Ibid.*

8. For what purpose were the experiences of ancient Israel recorded? 1 Cor. 10:11. Compare 1 Cor. 10:1-10; Rom. 15:4.

NOTE.—"Many are casting contempt upon the Old Testament Scriptures, but these are not to lose their sacredness; throughout all time they are not to be dropped out of our instruction. Paul writes concerning the experiences of the people of God in ancient times, 'All these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.' *The prophets spoke less for their own time than for the ages which have followed, and for our own day.*"—Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times,* April 2, 1896. (Italics supplied).

9. Cite and classify various Old Testament prophecies. (1) Jeremiah 27; 28; (2) Isa. 9:6, 7; (3) Dan. 8:14; (4) Jer. 51:64. Compare Rev. 18:2, 21.

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NOTE.—The following classification may be helpful in the study of Old Testament prophecies:

"1. Those that grew out of and were related only to the immediate historical situation or to events soon to occur. Such were Jeremiah's acted prophecy of the wooden and iron yokes (ch. 28), his symbolic purchase of a field near Anathoth (ch. 32), and his prediction of the death of the false prophet Hananiah (ch. 28: 15-17). . . .

"2. . . . Those that pointed forward manifestly and exclusively to events related to the coming of the Messiah, such as the prophetic statements of Isa. 9:6, 7; 40:3-5; 53; 61:1-3; Dan. 9; Zech. 9:9; 13:1, 6, 7.

"3. Those prophecies of the book of Daniel that deal primarily with historical events of the remote future, that is, with the Christian Era and the time of the end, as specifically stated in the prophecies themselves (Dan. 2:44; . . . 8:14). . . .

"4. Those that have a dual application —first, to a local, historical situation; second, to the Messiah and to His Kingdom. It is the prophecies of this fourth category that are most likely to be misunderstood and thus misapplied. Often this is because of a failure to realize that certain prophecies *do* have a dual aspect."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on Deut. 18:15.

10. What application did Peter make of Joel's prophecy? Acts 2:16, 17. Compare Joel 2:28-32.

Beware of False Prophets

11. What observation did Peter make concerning false prophets? 2 Peter 2:1-3.

12. Against what misuse of Scripture did Peter warn? 2 Peter 3:16.

NOTE.—"In an age when every wind of doctrine is blowing it is well to make certain that our understanding of Bible prophecy rests upon a positive 'Thus saith the Lord.' . . . In so doing we shall be secure against the fanciful explanations sometimes given certain Old Testament prophecies. We shall be protected against the grossly literal explanation of some expositors concerning a supposed return of literal Israel to literal Palestine to rule the world for a thousand years prior to the close of human probation, and also against other equally unscriptural interpretations that propose to apply allegorically to the church all the details of the promises originally made to literal Israel. Both of these extreme methods wrest the obvious intent of the Scriptures and render a sound understanding of the messages of the prophets for the church today unattainable."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* Vol. 4, p. 38.

Lesson 10, for December 6, 1969

Treasures New and Old

MEMORY VERSE: "Then said He unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." Matt. 13:52.

STUDY HELPS: "Christ's Object Lessons," pages 95-114, 124-134; "Christian Service," pages 7-29; "SDA Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To seek to discover: (1) in both Old and New Testaments evidences of inspired revelations of divine truth; (2) the progressive unfolding of truth; and (3) the results of walking in its light.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Great Storehouse of Truth

1. New treasures and old. Matt. 13:52.
2. Jesus accepted Old Testament as authoritative. Matt. 4:4, 7, 10.

II. Opening God's Treasure Store

3. With a desire for knowledge. Ps. 119:9-16.
4. To find heavenly treasure. Matt. 13:44.
5. For spiritual insight. 1 Cor. 2:14.
6. With the will to obey. 1 Peter 1:22.
7. With the hope of sanctification. John 17:17.

III. Receiving and Imparting Truth

8. The truth like mustard seed and leaven. Luke 13:18-21.
9. Eating and drinking God's truth. John 6:32-35.
10. Receiving and imparting. John 6:5-13.

IV. Advancing in the Light

11. With opening understanding. Eph. 1:15-19.
12. In the path of the just. Prov. 4:18.
13. Cleansing from all sin. 1 John 1:7.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"The treasure gained by the householder he does not hoard. He brings it forth to communicate to others. And by use the treasure increases. The householder has precious things both new and old. So Christ teaches that the truth committed to His disciples is to be communicated to the world. And as the knowledge of truth is imparted, it will increase."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* page 124.

The Great Storehouse of Truth

1. From what source does the householder bring forth "things new and old"? Matt. 13:52.

NOTE.—"The great storehouse of truth is the Word of God—the Written Word, the book of nature, and the book of experience in God's dealing with human life. Here are the treasures from which Christ's workers are to draw."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* page 125.

"By the 'old,' Christ refers to all the will of God as revealed 'in time past unto the fathers by the prophets' (Heb. 1:1. . . .). By the 'new,' He refers to His own teachings (see Heb. 1:2. . . .).

"It is important to note that neither upon this occasion nor at any other time did Jesus depreciate the value of the OT Scriptures or even suggest that in the future they were to have less force. . . . The OT is not invalidated by the NT, but amplified and given new life. Both were inspired by Christ and both are full of truth for the sincere seeker."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on Matt. 13:52.

2. How did Jesus show that He accepted the authority of the Old Testament Scriptures? Matt. 4:4, 7, 10. Compare Deut. 8:3 (last part); Ps. 17:4.

Opening God's Treasure Store

3. In what manner are we to relate ourselves to divine revelation? Ps. 119:9-16. Compare Ps. 19:9, 10.

4. How did Christ illustrate the search for, and discovery of, heavenly treasure? Matt. 13:44. Compare verses 45, 46.

NOTE.—"This parable illustrates the value of the heavenly treasure, and the effort that should be made to secure it. The finder of the treasure in the field was ready to part with all that he had, ready to put forth untiring labor, in order to secure the hidden riches. So the finder of heavenly treasure will count no labor too great and no sacrifice too dear, in order to gain the treasures of truth.

"In the parable the field containing the treasure represents the Holy Scriptures. And the gospel is the treasure. The earth itself is not so interlaced with golden veins and filled with precious things as is the Word of God."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* page 104.

5. Why are the things of the Spirit unappreciated by some? 1 Cor. 2:14. Compare 2 Cor. 4:3; John 3: 19-21; 9:39-41.

6. What effect is seen in the life of one who obeys the truth? 1 Peter 1:22.

NOTE.—"While your minds become sanctified by obedience to the truth," is Murdock's translation (Syriac New Testament). Willingness to do what God says is a prerequisite to receiving the life-giving benefits of God's Word. Having learned the truth it is essential to act upon it at once. See Acts 8:27-38.

7. In His prayer how did Jesus indicate that His disciples are to be sanctified? John 17:17. Compare Matt. 7:15-20.

NOTE.—"The Bible is the standard by which to test the claims of all who profess sanctification. Jesus prayed that His disciples might be sanctified through the truth, and He says, 'Thy Word is truth;' while the psalmist declares, 'Thy law is the truth.' All whom God is leading will manifest a high regard for the Scriptures in which His voice is heard. . . . 'Ye shall know them by their fruits.' We need no other evidence in order to judge of men's sanctification; if they are fearful lest they shall not obey the whole will of God, if they are listening diligently to His voice, trusting in His wisdom, and making His Word the man of their counsel, then, while they make no boasts of superior goodness, we may be sure that they are seeking to attain to perfection of Christian character. But if the claimants of holiness even intimate that they are no longer required to search the Scriptures, we need not hesitate to pronounce their sanctification spurious. They are leaning to their own understanding, instead of conforming to the will of God."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary,* Vol. 5, p. 1147.

Receiving and Imparting Truth

8. With what common things did Jesus illustrate the truths He taught? Luke 13:18-21. Compare Matt. 13:33.

NOTE.—"The leaven hidden in the flour works invisibly to bring the whole mass under its leavening process; so the leaven of truth works secretly, silently, steadily, to transform the soul. The natural inclinations are softened and subdued. New thoughts, new feelings, new motives, are implanted. A new standard of character is set up—the life of Christ. The mind is changed; the faculties are roused to action in new lines. Man is not endowed with new faculties, but the faculties he has are sanctified. The conscience is awakened. We are endowed with traits of character that enable us to do service for God."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* pages 98, 99.

> **"If you fail ninety-nine times in a hundred, but succeed in saving the one soul from ruin, you have done a noble deed for the Master's cause."**
> **—*Testimonies,* Vol. 4, p. 132.**

9. What did Jesus declare Himself and the truths He taught to be? John 6:32-35.

NOTE.—" 'I am the bread of life,' the Author, Nourisher, and Supporter of eternal, spiritual life. . . . To eat His flesh and to drink His blood means to receive Him as a heaven-sent teacher. Belief in Him is essential to spiritual life. . . .

"It is not enough for us to know and respect the words of the Scriptures. We must enter into the understanding of them, studying them earnestly, eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of God. Christians will reveal the degree to which they do this by the healthiness of their spiritual character. We must know the practical application of the Word to our own individual character-building. We are to be holy temples, in which God can live and walk and work. Never must we strive to lift ourselves above the servants whom God has chosen to do His work and to honor His holy name. 'All ye are brethren.' Let us apply this Word to our individual selves, comparing scripture with scripture." —Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary,* Vol. 5, p. 1135.

10. How did Jesus feed the hungry multitudes? John 6:5-13.

NOTE.—"In Christ's act of supplying the temporal necessities of a hungry multitude is wrapped up a deep spiritual lesson for all His workers. Christ received from the Father; He imparted to the disciples; they imparted to the multitude; and the people to one another. So all who are united to Christ will receive from Him the bread of life, the heavenly food, and impart it to others."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 369.

> "Do we receive the Bible as 'the oracle of God'? It is as really a divine communication as though its words came to us in an audible voice." —*Testimonies,* Vol. 5, p. 533.

Advancing in the Light

11. What wish did Paul express on behalf of the Ephesian believers? Eph. 1:15-19.

NOTE.—"In eternity we shall learn that which, had we received the enlightenment that it was possible to obtain here, would have opened our understanding. . . . Forever and forever new views of the perfection and glory of Christ will appear. Through endless ages the faithful Householder will bring forth from His treasures things new and old."—*My Life Today,* page 360.

12. How did the wise man describe the path of the just? Prov. 4:18. Compare John 8:12.

NOTE.—New light will never contradict old light. It is not independent of old light but often an unfolding of it. Sometimes what is called "new light" is simply a rediscovery of an old truth, "new" to the student, which may have been lost sight of for a time. The Bible is a center of light and, sun-like, its reserves of radiant knowledge are inexhaustible.

13. What is the result of walking in the light? 1 John 1:7.

NOTE.—"If we walk in the light we walk with God, from whom the light shines, and have fellowship not only with Him but also with all others who are following the Lord. Serving the same God, believing the same truths, following the same instructions on the pathway of life, we cannot fail to walk in unity. The slightest sign of ill will between us and our brethren should make us review our own conduct, to be sure that we are not veering away from the lighted path of life."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on 1 John 1:7.

Responsibilities of Bible Study

MEMORY VERSE: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness." 2 Tim. 2:15, 16.

STUDY HELPS: "Christ's Object Lessons," pages 110, 111; "Counsels on Sabbath School Work," pages 33-37; "The Desire of Ages," page 154; "Selected Messages," Bk. 1, pp. 44, 161, 162, 196; Bk. 2, pp. 102-104, 110, 113, 238; "Testimonies," Vol. 3, p. 194; Vol. 5, pp. 698-711; "SDA Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To discover how the Bible can help develop mature Christians and protect God's people from fanaticism.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Ignorance of Scripture

1. Sadducees' teaching unscriptural. Matt. 22:23-33.
2. Disciples knew not the Scriptures. John 20:9.
3. A famine for God's Word. Amos 8:11, 12.
4. Destroyed for lack of knowledge. Hosea 4:6.
5. A willing ignorance. 2 Peter 3:3-5.

II. Misinterpreting Scripture

6. Movement to make Christ king. John 6:14, 15.
7. Cleansing of the sanctuary. Dan. 8:14.

III. Wresting the Scriptures

8. Bible reading without profit. 2 Peter 3:15, 16.
9. Hold to the truth! 2 Peter 3:17, 18.

IV. The Unfolding Scriptures

10. God's Word a light. Ps. 119:105.
11. The Spirit the Revealer. 1 Cor. 2:10, 11.

V. Habits of Scripture Study

12. The example of the Bereans. Acts 17:11.
13. Manna each day for Israel. Ex. 16:4.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"When faith in God's Word is lost, the soul has no guide, no safeguard. The youth are drawn into paths which lead away from God and from everlasting life.

"To this cause may in great degree be attributed the widespread iniquity in our world today. When the Word of God is set aside, its power to restrain the evil passions of the natural heart is rejected." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 41.

Ignorance of Scripture

1. Why did the Sadducees err in the understanding of spiritual matters? Matt. 22:23-33.

NOTE.—"He [Jesus] did not charge them, as He had charged the Pharisees, with hypocrisy, but with error of belief.

"The Sadducees had flattered themselves that they of all men adhered most strictly to the Scriptures. But Jesus showed that they had not known their true meaning. That knowledge must be brought home to the heart by the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. Their ignorance of the Scriptures and the power of God He declared to be the cause of their confusion of faith and darkness of mind."—*The Desire of Ages,* pages 605, 606.

2. What shows that the disciples did not always understand and readily grasp the Scriptures? John 20:9. Compare Luke 24:25.

NOTE.—The disciples were sometimes dull of understanding and did not grasp divine ideas, for example, that Christ must suffer and die and rise from the dead. Even the character of Christ's mission of grace they did not appreciate fully until after Pentecost. Doubt and unbelief and fear plagued them. All of this was associated with their ignorance of the Scriptures and preconceived ideas that prevented them from grasping the truth as Christ taught it to them. This was why they were so terribly disappointed at the cross.

3. What prediction did Amos make? Amos 8:11, 12.

NOTE.—"Those who had not prized God's Word were hurrying to and fro, wandering from sea to sea, and from the north to the east, to seek the Word of the Lord. Said the angel, 'They shall not find it. There is a famine in the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but for hearing the words of the Lord. What would they not give for one word of approval from God! but no, they must hunger and thirst on. Day after day have they slighted salvation, prizing earthly riches and earthly pleasure higher than any heavenly treasure or inducement. They have rejected Jesus and despised His saints. The filthy must remain filthy forever.' "—*Early Writings,* pages 281, 282.

4. Why were God's ancient people, Israel, destroyed? Hosea 4:6. Compare 8:12.

NOTE.—"The greatest ignorance that now curses the human race is in regard to the binding claims of the law of God; and this ignorance is the result of neglecting the study of the Word of God. It is Satan's determined plan to so engage and absorb the mind, that God's great guidebook shall not be the Book of books, and that the sinner may not be led from the path of transgression to the path of obedience."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education,* page 131.

5. What attitude did Peter say would be expressed by many toward revealed truth? 2 Peter 3:3-5. Compare Jude 17-19.

NOTE.—Those "who scoff at religion and live self-indulgent lives" (NEB), the shoulder-shruggers of our time and wishful thinkers, point to the uniformity of natural processes and argue against the Bible teaching of a cataclysmic second coming of Christ on the grounds that "everything continues exactly as it has always been since the world began." NEB. But the same word of God which called forth the earth in the beginning and established the laws of the natural world has proclaimed a second advent of Christ (in the midst of the convulsion of nature), and it will be fulfilled!

Misinterpreting Scripture

6. After the miracle of the loaves, what did certain men seek to do with Jesus? John 6:14, 15.

> "Every day some portion of time should be appropriated to the study of the lessons." —*Counsels on Sabbath School Work,* page 53.

NOTE.—The Jewish expectation of a Messiah-deliverer who would liberate their nation from Rome and exalt it to world dominion was based on the belief that the covenant promises of the Old Testament were to be fulfilled unconditionally, that is, irrespective of whether they as a people complied with the conditions upon which the covenant promises had been made. Even the disciples were blinded by the popular failure to recognize the conditional nature of these promises of national greatness. As a result, the disciples now united in the plan of the multitude to make Jesus king, in the expectation that He would liberate Israel from Rome. But Christ dismissed them, and then the multitude, and quietly withdrew to the mountain.

The disappointment of the disciples at the death of Christ (Luke 24:21) likewise came about as the result of their failure to understand and properly apply Old Testament prophecies.

7. What was to be cleansed at the end of the 2,300 days? Dan. 8:14.

NOTE.—The prophecy of the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8:14, the early Adventists believed to have reference to the second advent. "But the appointed time had passed, and the Lord had not appeared. The believers knew that God's Word could not fail; their interpretation of the prophecy must be at fault; but where was the mistake?"—*The Great Controversy,* page 409.

"In their investigation they learned that there is no Scripture evidence sustaining the popular view that the earth is the sanctuary; but they found in the Bible a full explanation of the subject of the sanctuary, its nature, location, and services; the testimony of the sacred writers being so clear and ample as to place the matter beyond all question."—*Ibid.,* p. 411.

Wresting the Scriptures

8. What did Peter say some had done with Paul's writings? 2 Peter 3:15, 16.

NOTE.—"There are many things apparently difficult or obscure, which God will make plain and simple to those who thus seek an understanding of them. But without the guidance of the Holy Spirit we shall be continually liable to wrest the Scriptures or to misinterpret them. There is much reading of the Bible that is without profit, and in many cases a positive injury. When the Word of God is opened without reverence and without prayer; when the thoughts and affections are not fixed upon God, or in harmony with His will, the mind is clouded with doubts; and in the very study of the Bible, skepticism strengthens. The enemy takes control of the thoughts, and he suggests interpretations that are not correct. Whenever men are not in word and deed seeking to be in harmony with God, then, however learned they may be, they are liable to err in their understanding of Scripture, and it is not safe to trust to their explanations. Those who look to the Scriptures to find discrepancies, have not spiritual insight. With distorted vision they will see many causes for doubt and unbelief in things that are really plain and simple."—*Steps to Christ,* pages 110, 111.

9. What warning does Peter give those who know of the dangers of being led astray? 2 Peter 3:17, 18.

The Unfolding Scriptures

10. What is God's Word declared to be? Ps. 119:105.

11. Who is the Revealer of the deep things of God? 1 Cor. 2:10, 11. Compare John 16:13, 14.

NOTE.—"God intends that even in this life the truths of His Word shall be ever unfolding to His people. There is only one way in which this knowledge can be obtained. We can attain to an understanding

of God's Word only through the illumination of that Spirit by which the Word was given. 'The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God;' 'for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.' 1 Corinthians 2:11, 10. And the Saviour's promise to His followers was, 'When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth. . . . For He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you.' John 16:13, 14."—*Steps to Christ*, page 109.

Habits of Scripture Study

12. How often did the Bereans study the Bible? Acts 17:11.

NOTE.—The Bereans "examined" (RSV) the Scriptures daily. So should we *examine* them, verse by verse, studying each part carefully. Words and expressions should be studied to find the author's intent and meaning. Questions should be asked, for example: "Why did the sacred writer put it just this way?" "What is meant by this expression?" The context in which every statement occurs must be determined and studied by the reader if a correct understanding is to be reached.

13. How often did God give manna to feed Israel? Ex. 16:4. Compare Ps. 78:24, 25; Rev. 2:17.

NOTE.—"Are all the members of your church seeking to gather fresh manna every morning and evening? Are you seeking divine enlightenment? or are you devising means whereby you can glorify yourselves? Are you, with your whole soul, might, mind, and strength, loving and serving God in blessing others around you by leading them to the Light of the world?"—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 486.

Lesson 12, for December 20, 1969

The Scriptures and My Life

MEMORY VERSE: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." John 6:63.

STUDY HELPS: "Child Guidance," page 507; "Counsels on Sabbath School Work," pages 17-23; "The Great Controversy," chapter 37; "Messages to Young People," pages 253-264, 105-113; "Steps to Christ," chapter, "A Knowledge of God"; "Selected Messages," Bk. 2, p. 39.

STUDY AIM: To discover how the Bible may touch the total life of man and the power it has to regenerate the spiritual life.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Intellectual Life and the Word

1. Understanding for man's mind. Ps. 119:130.
2. Limits to man's understanding. Job 11:7-9.

II. The Practical Life and the Word

3. Physical toil and man's well-being. Gen. 3:17-19; 1 Thess. 4:11, 12.

4. Provisions for social equality. Num. 26:55, 56; Lev. 25:23.
5. The care of the poor and lowly. Deut. 15:7, 8, 11; 24:14, 15, 19.
6. Acknowledging God's blessings. Mal. 3:10-12.

III. The Spiritual Life and the Word

7. Physical bread for the multitude. John 6:25-27.
8. Spiritual bread for all. John 6:48-58.
9. Eating His words. John 6:63.
10. Spiritual life only in Christ. John 6:66-69.

IV. Eternal Life and the Word

11. Earnest desire for the Word. 1 Peter 2:2.
12. Receiving God's Word. James 1:21.
13. God's blessed man. James 1:22-27.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"The life of Christ that gives life to the world is in His word. It was by His word that Jesus healed disease and cast out demons; by His word He stilled the sea, and raised the dead; and the people bore witness that His word was with power. He spoke the word of God, as He had spoken through all the prophets and teachers of the Old Testament. The whole Bible is a manifestation of Christ, and the Saviour desired to fix the faith of His followers on the Word. When His visible presence should be withdrawn, the Word must be their source of power. Like their master, they were to live 'by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.' Matt. 4:4."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 390.

The Intellectual Life and the Word

1. What precious gift is imparted by the entrance of God's words? Ps. 119: 130. Compare Ps. 119:104; 19:7.

NOTE.—"As a means of intellectual training, the Bible is more effective than any other book, or all other books combined. The greatness of its themes, the dignified simplicity of its utterances, the beauty of its imagery, quicken and uplift the thoughts as nothing else can. No other study can impart such mental power as does the effort to grasp the stupendous truths of revelation. The mind thus brought in contact with the thoughts of the Infinite cannot but expand and strengthen."—*Education,* page 124.

2. What limits did one of Job's friends point out in man's search for God? Job 11:7-9.

NOTE.—"To acknowledge that we cannot fully comprehend the great truths of the Bible is only to admit that the finite mind is inadequate to grasp the infinite; that man, with his limited, human knowledge, cannot understand the purposes of Omniscience. . . .

"It is right to study closely the teachings of the Bible and to search into 'the deep things of God' so far as they are revealed in Scripture. 1 Corinthians 2:10. While 'the secret things belong unto the Lord our God,' 'those things which are revealed belong unto us.' Deuteronomy 29:29. But it is Satan's work to pervert the investigative powers of the mind."—*Steps to Christ,* page 108.

The Practical Life and the Word

3. What practical lessons concerning physical work are taught in God's Word? Gen. 3:17-19; 1 Thess. 4:11, 12. Compare 1 Tim. 5:8; Prov. 24: 30-34.

NOTE.—"*In the sweat of thy face.* The arduous toil that was to add to man's burdensome life is now vividly expressed.

This refers specifically to the husbandman, who must live by forcing from a reluctant earth food for himself and his family, but it applies equally to all other vocations. Since Adam's fall human achievement may be realized only through toil. Nevertheless, it should be recognized that this punishment was indeed a blessing in disguise for sinful beings. When a man works he is far less likely to sin than when he spends his days in idleness. Toil and labor develop character and teach man humility and cooperation with God. This is one reason why the Christian church has generally found its most loyal adherents and supporters among the laboring class. Work, even when arduous, should not be despised; 'a blessing is in it.' "—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on Gen. 3:19.

4. What principle of land distribution did God give to ancient Israel? Num. 26:55, 56; Lev. 25:23.

NOTE.—"By the special direction of God the land had been divided by lot. After the division was made no one was at liberty to trade his estate. Neither was he to sell his land unless poverty compelled him to do so, and then, whenever he or any of his kindred might desire to redeem it, the purchaser must not refuse to sell it; and if unredeemed, it would revert to its first possessor or his heirs in the year of jubilee. . . .

"The Lord would place a check upon the inordinate love of property and power. Great evils would result from the continued accumulation of wealth by one class, and the poverty and degradation of another. Without some restraint the power of the wealthy would become a monopoly, and the poor, though in every respect fully as worthy in God's sight, would be regarded and treated as inferior to their more prosperous brethren. The sense of this oppression would arouse the passions of the poorer class. There would be a feeling of despair and desperation which would tend to demoralize society and open the door to crimes of every description. The regulations that God established were designed to promote social equality. The provisions of the sabbatical year and the jubilee would, in a great measure, set right that which during the interval had gone wrong in the social and political economy of the nation."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 534.

5. How did God provide for the care of the poor? Deut. 15:7, 8, 11; 24:14, 15, 19. Compare Gal. 6:2.

6. In what tangible way should all acknowledge God's ownership of material things? Mal. 3:10-12. Compare Lev. 27:30.

The Spiritual Life and the Word

7. For what reason did Jesus say the people sought Him? John 6:25-27.

8. How did the Jews misunderstand Christ's words about giving them His flesh to eat? John 6:48-58.

NOTE.—To the Jews and to some of His disciples Jesus' affirmation was "a hard saying." But Jesus was making plain the same fact that He was to teach in the institution of the Lord's Supper—namely, that He was Himself the answer to man's spiritual hunger. And He would use whatever symbols could best portray His personal power to satisfy the hungry souls of men.

9. How did Jesus explain His statement about eating His flesh and drinking His blood? John 6:63. Compare Jer. 15:16; Job 23:12.

NOTE.—"By looking constantly to Jesus with the eye of faith, we shall be strengthened. God will make the most precious

revelations to His hungering, thirsting people. They will find that Christ is a personal Saviour. As they feed upon His Word, they find that it is spirit and life. The Word destroys the natural, earthly nature, and imparts a new life in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit comes to the soul as a Comforter. By the transforming agency of His grace, the image of God is reproduced in the disciple; he becomes a new creature. Love takes the place of hatred, and the heart receives the divine similitude. This is what it means to live 'by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.' This is eating the Bread that comes down from heaven."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 391.

10. When many of the disciples forsook Christ, what did He ask the Twelve? What was Peter's reply? John 6:66-69.

NOTE.—" 'To whom shall we go?' Not from the teaching of Christ, His lessons of love and mercy, to the darkness of unbelief, the wickedness of the world. While the Saviour was forsaken by many who had witnessed His wonderful works, Peter expressed the faith of the disciples,—'Thou art that Christ.' The very thought of losing this anchor of their souls filled them with fear and pain. To be destitute of a Saviour was to be adrift on a dark and stormy sea."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 393.

Eternal Life and the Word

11. How eagerly should we desire "the sincere milk of the Word"? 1 Peter 2:2.

12. In what spirit should the Word of God be received? What is the Word of God able to do for us? James 1:21.

13. What man is said to be blessed in his deeds? James 1:22-27.

NOTE.—"[James 1:23-27 quoted.] This is the word of the living God. The law is God's great moral looking glass. Man is to compare his words, his spirit, his actions with the Word of God. . . . True religion means living the Word in your practical life. Your profession is not of any value without the practical doing of the Word." —Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 935.

Lesson 13, for December 27, 1969

Triumph of the Scriptures

MEMORY VERSE: "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the Word of our God shall stand forever." Isa. 40:8.

STUDY HELPS: "The Great Controversy," chapter 15; "Daniel and the Revelation," pages 529-542 (1944 revised edition, pages 531-547); "The SDA Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To discover why the Bible has survived the bitterest attacks of its enemies and why it will endure to the close of time.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Power and Endurance of God's Word

1. Power in God's Word. Heb. 4:12.
2. Enduring qualities. Isa. 40:8.

II. God's Word Tested

3. A prophetic symbol. Rev. 11:3 (first part), 4.
4. Appearance of the witnesses. Rev. 11:3 (second part).
5. Their great power and influence. Rev. 11:5, 6.

III. The Two Witnesses in Sackcloth

6. The enemy of the witnesses. Rev. 11:7.
7. Struggle and warfare. Rev. 11:8-10.

IV. The Two Witnesses Exalted

8. Their "resurrection." Rev. 11:9, 11.
9. Their glorification. Rev. 11:12.

V. God's Witnesses and the Final Message

10. God's last message. Rev. 14:6-12.
11. The earth lightened. Rev. 18:1.
12. Examples for us. 1 Cor. 10:11, 12.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"The infidel Voltaire once boastingly said: 'I am weary of hearing people repeat that twelve men established the Christian religion. I will prove that one man may suffice to overthrow it.' Generations have passed since his death. Millions have joined in the war upon the Bible. But it is so far from being destroyed, that where there were a hundred in Voltaire's time, there are now ten thousand, yes, a hundred thousand copies of the Book of God. In the words of an early Reformer concerning the Christian church, 'The Bible is an anvil that has worn out many hammers.' Saith the Lord: 'No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn.' Isaiah 54:17."—*The Great Controversy,* page 288.

Power and Endurance of God's Word

1. How is the power of God's Word described? Heb. 4:12. Compare Jer. 23:29.

2. How long will the Word of God endure? Isa. 40:8. Compare Ps. 111: 7, 8.

God's Word Tested

3. What prophetic symbol is introduced by the angel in the book of Revelation? Rev. 11:3 (first part), 4. Compare Zech. 4:1-6, 11-14.

NOTE.—"Inasmuch as the fullest expression of the Holy Spirit to men is contained in the Scriptures of the OT and the NT, they may be considered to be the two witnesses."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on Rev. 11:3.

"The two witnesses represent the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament. Both are important testimonies to the origin and perpetuity of the law of God. Both are witnesses also to the plan of salvation. The types, sacrifices, and prophecies of the Old Testament point forward to a Saviour to come. The Gospels and Epistles of the New Testament tell of a Saviour who has

come in the exact manner foretold by type and prophecy."—*The Great Controversy,* page 267.

4. For how long were the two witnesses to prophecy in sackcloth? With what were they clothed? Rev. 11:3 (second part).

NOTE.—The twelve hundred sixty symbolic days or literal years (Ezek. 4:6; Num. 14:34) are mentioned several times in the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation (see Dan. 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 12:6; 13:5). Protestant commentators have identified this prophetic period with the historical dates 538-1798, when the papacy dominated Western Europe and the Word of God was dishonored by the church of Rome and was thus, figuratively, dressed in sackcloth.

"During the greater part of this period, God's witnesses remained in a state of obscurity. The papal power sought to hide from the people the Word of truth, and set before them false witnesses to contradict its testimony. . . . When the Bible was proscribed by religious and secular authority; . . . then the faithful witnesses prophesied in sackcloth. Yet they continued their testimony throughout the entire period of 1,260 years. In the darkest times there were faithful men who loved God's Word and were jealous for His honor. To these loyal servants were given wisdom, power, and authority to declare His truth during the whole of this time."—*The Great Controversy,* pages 267, 268.

5. What power did the witnesses have over their enemies? Rev. 11:5, 6. Compare Rev. 22:19.

NOTE.—"All who exalt their own opinions above divine revelation, all who would change the plain meaning of Scripture to suit their own convenience, or for the sake of conforming to the world, are taking upon themselves a fearful responsibility. The Written Word, the law of God, will measure the character of every man, and condemn all whom this unerring test shall declare wanting."—*The Great Controversy,* page 268.

The Two Witnesses in Sackcloth

6. Who is said to make war against the two witnesses? Rev. 11:7.

NOTE.—"Commentators identify this beast as a power that would seek to destroy the Scriptures (symbolized by the two witnesses) at the close of the 1,260-day period, in A.D. 1798. . . . Inasmuch as atheism was particularly popular in France at this time, and the anti-religious spirit of the day naturally militated against the use of and belief in Scripture, the First French Republic has been identified as the beast of the present passage."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on Rev. 11:7.

7. What disrespect was shown to the two witnesses? Rev. 11:8-10.

NOTE.—"It has been Rome's policy, under a profession of reverence for the Bible, to keep it locked up in an unknown tongue and hidden away from the people. Under her rule the witnesses prophesied, 'clothed in sackcloth.' But another power—the beast from the bottomless pit—was to arise to make open, avowed war upon the Word of God."—*The Great Controversy,* page 269.

The use of the words "Egypt" and "Sodom" and "great city" is symbolic and characterized the licentiousness and athesim of France during the Revolution when the Word of God and religion were despised by the government of the First French Republic, when "Reason" was enthroned as Deity and a profligate woman was worshiped as her symbol.

> "Receive into the soul by faith the incorruptible seed of the Word, and it will bring forth a character and a life after the similitude of the character and the life of God."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* page 38.

The Two Witnesses Exalted

8. What is said concerning the "resurrection" of the two witnesses? Rev. 11:9, 11.

NOTE.—"In harmony with the principle of prophetic interpretation, that a day stands for a year, 'three days and an half' would be equivalent to three years and a half. Seventh-day Adventists, who generally understand the beast of v. 7 to represent the First French Republic (1789 to 1801), especially in terms of its anti-religious bias, find this prophecy fulfilled during that brief period in French revolutionary history when atheism was at its height. This period may be reckoned from November 26, 1793, when a decree, issued in Paris, abolished religion, to June 17, 1797, when, it is held, the French government removed restrictions against the practice of religion."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on Rev. 11:9.

"It was in 1793 that the decrees which abolished the Christian religion and set aside the Bible passed the French Assembly. Three years and a half later a resolution rescinding these decrees, thus granting toleration to the Scriptures, was adopted by the same body. The world stood aghast at the enormity of guilt which had resulted from a rejection of the Sacred Oracles, and men recognized the necessity of faith in God and His Word as the foundation of virtue and morality."—*The Great Controversy,* page 287.

9. How great was to be the exaltation of the witnesses? Rev. 11:12.

NOTE.—"This exaltation of the witnesses has been understood as symbolizing the remarkable popularity that the Scriptures have enjoyed since the early 19th century. Soon after the French Revolution various national Bible societies were established. Particularly notable among these were the British and Foreign Bible Society, founded in 1804, and the American Bible Society, organized in 1816. These societies, with others, have circulated the Scriptures throughout the world in more than 1,000 languages. Thus in the last century and a half, the Bible, rather than being relegated to oblivion as a spiritual guide, has come to enjoy its widest circulation.

"*Ascended . . . in a cloud.* As Jesus bade His disciples farewell, a cloud 'received Him out of their sight' (Acts 1:9). So also the two witnesses are carried to heaven in a cloud. The figure fittingly describes the exaltation of the Scriptures in the period following their suppression in France."—*SDA Bible Commentary,* on Rev. 11:12.

God's Witnesses and the Final Message

10. What messages did the prophet hear the three angels proclaim? Rev. 14:6-12. Compare 1 Peter 1:25.

NOTE.—The Word of God endures forever. Seventh-day Adventists proclaim these three angels' messages. Here the testimony of the two witnesses is heard speaking forth the gospel tidings in the setting of the judgment-hour message. This we may regard as the climactic act of God in the exaltation of the two witnesses.

11. What happened when another angel came down from heaven? Rev. 18:1.

NOTE.—The entire world is lightened with the glory of truth shining from the prophetic Scriptures, and many heed the call of the angel of Revelation 18:1-4 to come out of Babylon and join the remnant people of God in their march to the Holy City.

12. What important truth did the apostle Paul emphasize? 1 Cor. 10: 11, 12.

NOTE.—Phillips translates verse 11 as follows: "Now these things which happened to our ancestors are illustrations of the way in which God works, and they were written down to be a warning to us who are the heirs of the ages which have gone before us."

THIRTEENTH SABBATH OFFERING

December 20, 1969

Southern Asia Division

Southern Asia is not only the home of several powerful non-Christian religions, it is the birthplace of two of the most aggressive of these; namely, Hinduism and Buddhism. For centuries, even millenniums, the views of life offered by these religions have cast their spell over the hundreds of millions of people who live in these lands and have made it extremely difficult for the gospel to penetrate.

Of late, however, the Spirit of God is being poured out in unprecedented measure, and we are beginning to see each year hundreds accepting Christianity. One of the agencies of the church in meeting the challenge of spreading the gospel has been its educational system, which in mission fields is open to the public. This avenue in Southern Asia has accounted for almost one third of all baptisms through the years of our endeavor.

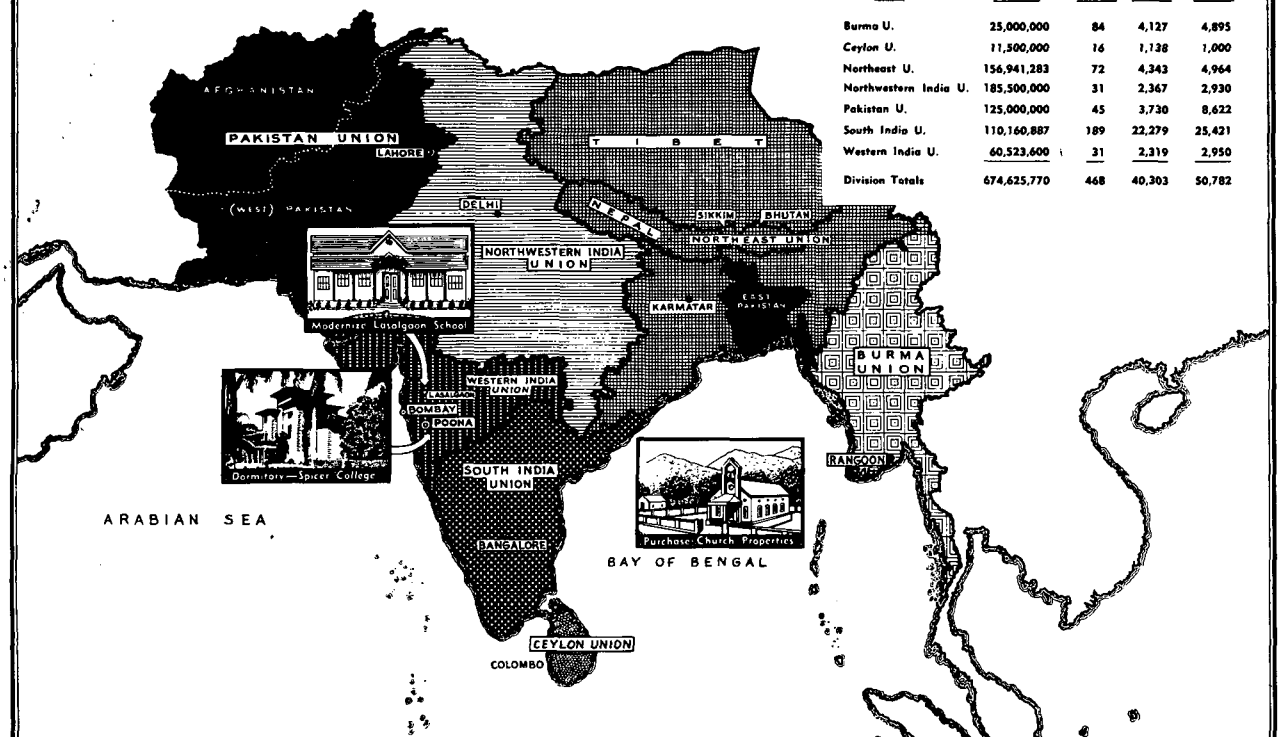
The overflow this quarter will be used to supply additional dormitory space for the students at Spicer Memorial College and to modernize and improve the Lasalgaon High School. Part of the overflow will also be used for new church buildings. These are all urgent needs. Southern Asia is counting on fellow believers around the world to come to her aid at this time. Make your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering a real Christmas sacrifice offering.

Lessons for the First Quarter of 1970

Beginning with the first quarter of 1970 the senior Sabbath School lessons will appear in a different format than has been used for many years in the past. One page of the quarterly will be devoted to the material for one day's study. Each lesson will be divided into six sections. Those who have not yet received a copy of the first quarter's *Quarterly* will be helped in the study of the first lesson by this outline:

1. The New Name. Luke 11:2; Matt. 10:29-31; Mal. 3:17; 1 John 4:8-10.
2. The Father Revealed in Christ. John 14:8-10; Rom. 5:5; Gal. 4:6; Matt. 11:27; John 14:6.
3. The Privilege of Sonship. 1 John 3:1, 2; John 1:12, 13.
4. The Discipline of Sonship. Heb. 12:5-7, 11.
5. The Father's Love. Rom. 8:35-39; John 10:29, 30; 2 Cor. 5:14.
6. Approaching the Father. John 4:23, 24; Heb. 4:16; Heb. 10:22.

SOUTHERN ASIA DIVISION



SOUTHERN ASIA DIVISION

Unions	Population	Churches	Church Members	Sab. Sch. Members
Burma U.	25,000,000	84	4,127	4,895
Ceylon U.	11,500,000	16	1,138	1,000
Northeast U.	156,941,283	72	4,343	4,964
Northwestern India U.	185,500,000	31	2,367	2,930
Pakistan U.	125,000,000	45	3,730	8,622
South India U.	110,160,887	189	22,279	25,421
Western India U.	60,523,600	31	2,319	2,950
Division Totals	674,625,770	468	40,303	50,782