



Sabbath School Lesson 1 | Sep 25 – Oct 01

ADDITIONAL READING: SELECTED QUOTES FROM ELLEN G. WHITE

Preamble to Deuteronomy

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

Through centuries of persecution, conflict, and darkness, God has sustained His church. Not one cloud has fallen upon it that He has not prepared for; not one opposing force has risen to counterwork His work, that He has not foreseen. All has taken place as He predicted. He has not left His church forsaken, but has traced in prophetic declarations what would occur, and that which His Spirit inspired the prophets to foretell has been brought about. All His purposes will be fulfilled. His law is linked with His throne, and no power of evil can destroy it. Truth is inspired and guarded by God; and it will triumph over all opposition.

During ages of spiritual darkness the church of God has been as a city set on a hill. From age to age, through successive generations, the pure doctrines of heaven have been unfolding within its borders. Enfeebled and defective as it may appear, the church is the one object upon which God bestows in a special sense His supreme regard. It is the theater of His grace, in which He delights to reveal His power to transform hearts.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 11, 12.

The weight of the grief of ages was upon [Christ]. He saw the terrible effects of the transgression of God's law. He saw that in the history of the world, beginning with the death of Abel, the conflict between good and evil had been unceasing. Looking down the years to come, He saw the suffering and sorrow, tears and death, that were to be the lot of men. His heart was pierced with the pain of the human family of all ages and in all lands. The woes of the sinful race were heavy upon His soul, and the fountain of His tears was broken up as He longed to relieve all their distress.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 534.

Divine love makes its most touching appeals to the heart when it calls upon us to manifest the same tender compassion that Christ manifested. That man only who has unselfish love for his brother has true love for God. The true Christian will not willingly permit the soul in peril and need to go unwarned, uncared for. He will not hold himself aloof from the erring, leaving them to plunge farther into unhappiness and discouragement or to fall on Satan's battleground.

Those who have never experienced the tender, winning love of Christ cannot lead others to the fountain of life. His love in the heart is a constraining power, which leads men to reveal Him in the conversation, in the tender, pitiful spirit, in the uplifting of the lives of those with whom they associate. Christian workers who succeed in their efforts must know Christ; and in order to know Him, they must know His love. In heaven their

fitness as workers is measured by their ability to love as Christ loved and to work as He worked.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 550.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

The history of the great conflict between good and evil, from the time it first began in heaven to the final overthrow of rebellion and the total eradication of sin, is also a demonstration of God's unchanging love.

The gift of Christ reveals the Father's heart.

God made to our world the wonderful gift of His only-begotten Son. In the light of this act, it could never be said by the inhabitants of other worlds that God could have done more than He did to show His love for the children of men. He made a sacrifice that defies all computation.— *The Faith I Live By*, p. 59.

Christ has shown His great love for us by giving His life that we should not perish in our sins, that He might clothe us with His salvation. If this divine love is cherished in our hearts, it cements and strengthens our union with those of like faith. "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." The strengthening of our love for our brethren and sisters strengthens our love for Christ. This principle of love for God and for those for whom Christ died, needs to be quickened by the Holy Spirit and cemented with brotherly kindness, tenderness; it needs to be strengthened by acts which testify that God is love. This union, which joins heart with heart, is not the result of sentimentalism, but the working of a healthful principle. Faith works by love, and purifies the soul from all selfishness. Thus the soul is perfected in love. And having found grace and mercy through Christ's precious blood, how can we fail to be tender and merciful?—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 110.

It was a being of wonderful power and glory that had set himself against God. Of Lucifer the Lord says, "Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty." Lucifer had been the covering cherub. He had stood in the light of God's presence. He had been the highest of all created beings, and had been foremost in revealing God's purposes to the universe. After he had sinned, his power to deceive was the more deceptive, and the unveiling of his character was the more difficult, because of the exalted position he had held with the Father.

God could have destroyed Satan and his sympathizers as easily as one can cast a pebble to the earth; but He did not do this. Rebellion was not to be overcome by force. Compelling power is found only under Satan's government. The Lord's principles are not of this order. His authority rests upon goodness, mercy, and love; and the presentation of these principles is the means to be used. God's government is moral, and truth and love are to be the prevailing power.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 758, 759.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

Our first parents, though created innocent and holy, were not placed beyond the possibility of wrongdoing. God made them free moral agents, capable of appreciating the wisdom and benevolence of His character and the justice of His requirements, and with full liberty to yield or to withhold obedience. They were to enjoy communion with God and with holy angels; but before they could be rendered eternally secure, their loyalty must be tested. At the very beginning of man's existence a check was placed upon the desire for self-indulgence, the fatal passion that lay at the foundation of Satan's fall. The tree of knowledge, which stood near the tree of life in the midst of the garden, was to be a test of the obedience, faith, and love of our parents. While permitted to eat freely of every other tree, they were forbidden to taste of this, on pain of death. They were also to be exposed to the temptations of Satan; but if they endured the trial, they would finally be placed beyond his power, to enjoy perpetual favor with God.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 48.

Of the antediluvians we read, “God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. . . . And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.”

God warned the inhabitants of the old world of what He purposed to do in cleansing the earth of its impurity. But they laughed to scorn what they regarded as a superstitious prediction. They mocked at Noah’s warning of a coming flood. When Christ was upon the earth He gave warning of what was coming upon Jerusalem because the people had rejected truth, despising the messages that God had sent. But His warning was unheeded.

The Lord has sent us, by His ambassadors, messages of warning, declaring that the end of all things is at hand. Some will listen to these warnings, but by the vast majority they will be disregarded.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 343.

The heart in its natural state is a habitation for unholy thoughts and sinful passions. When brought into subjection to Christ, it must be cleansed by the Spirit from all defilement. This cannot be done without the consent of the individual. . . . Only in His strength can [we] keep guard over the words and actions. In the work of heart-keeping we must be instant in prayer, unwearied in petitioning the throne of grace for assistance. Those who take the name of Christian should come to God in earnestness and humility, pleading for help. The Saviour has told us to pray without ceasing. The Christian cannot always be in the position of prayer, but his thoughts and desires can always be upward. Our self-confidence would vanish, did we talk less and pray more.

The affections should center upon God. Contemplate His greatness, His mercy and excellences. Let His goodness and love and perfection of character captivate your heart.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 99.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

For more than a thousand years the Jewish people had awaited the Saviour’s coming. Upon this event they had rested their brightest hopes. In song and prophecy, in temple rite and household prayer, they had enshrined His name. And yet at His coming they knew Him not. The Beloved of heaven was to them “as a root out of a dry ground;” He had “no form nor comeliness;” and they saw in Him no beauty that they should desire Him. “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.”

Yet God had chosen Israel. He had called them to preserve among men the knowledge of His law, and of the symbols and prophecies that pointed to the Saviour. He desired them to be as wells of salvation to the world.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 27.

Abraham was bidden, “Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee.” “And he went out, not knowing whither he went.” So to the apostle Paul, praying in the temple at Jerusalem, came the message from God, “Depart; for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.” So those who are called to unite with Christ must leave all, in order to follow Him. Old associations must be broken up, plans of life relinquished, earthly hopes surrendered. In toil and tears, in solitude, and through sacrifice, must the seed be sown.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 36.

Laboring for the salvation of the soul is employment worthy of the highest honor. It matters not what may be the form of our labor, or among what class, whether high or low. In God’s sight these distinctions will not affect its true worth. The sincere, earnest, contrite soul, however ignorant, is precious in the sight of the Lord. He places His own signet upon men, judging, not by their rank, not by their wealth, not by their intellectual greatness, but by their oneness with Christ.—*Gospel Workers*, p. 332.

The object of God in choosing a people before all the world was not only that He might adopt them as His sons and daughters, but that through them the world might receive the grace that bringeth salvation. When

the Lord chose Abraham, it was not simply to be the special friend of God, but to be a medium of the peculiar privileges the Lord desired to bestow upon the nations. Jesus, in that last prayer with His disciples before His crucifixion, said, “For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.” In like manner Christians who are purified through the truth will possess saving qualities that preserve the world from utter moral corruption.

Salt must be mingled with the substance to which it is added; it must penetrate and infuse in order to preserve. So it is through personal contact and association that men are reached by the saving power of the gospel. They are not saved in masses, but as individuals. Personal influence is a power. We must come close to those whom we desire to benefit.—Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, pp. 35, 36.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

The covenant that God made with His people at Sinai is to be our refuge and defense. The Lord said to Moses:—

“Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, than ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” . . .

This covenant is of just as much force today as it was when the Lord made it with ancient Israel.

This is the pledge that God’s people are to make in these last days. Their acceptance with God depends on a faithful fulfilment of the terms of their agreement with Him. God includes in His covenant all who will obey Him. To all who will do justice and judgment, keeping their hand from doing any evil, the promise is, “Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.”—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1103.

If the Israelites had obeyed God’s requirements, they would have been practical Christians. They would have been happy; for they would have been keeping God’s ways, and not following the inclinations of their own natural hearts. Moses did not leave them to misconstrue the words of the Lord or to misapply His requirements. He wrote all the words of the Lord in a book, that they might be referred to afterward. In the mount he had written them as Christ Himself dictated them.

Bravely did the Israelites speak the words promising obedience to the Lord, after hearing His covenant read in the audience of the people. They said, “All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.” Then the people were set apart and sealed to God. A sacrifice was offered to the Lord. A portion of the blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled upon the altar. This signified that the people had consecrated themselves—body, mind, and soul—to God. A portion was sprinkled upon the people. This signified that through the sprinkled blood of Christ, God graciously accepted them as His special treasure. Thus the Israelites entered into a solemn covenant with God.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1107.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

Aaron died at Mount Hor, for the Lord had said that he should not enter the Promised Land, because, with Moses, he had sinned at the time of bringing water from the rock at Meribah. Moses and the sons of Aaron buried him in the mount, that the people might not be tempted to make too great ceremony over his body, and be guilty of the sin of idolatry.

Moses was soon to die, and he was commanded to gather the children of Israel together before his death and relate to them all the journeyings of the Hebrew host since their departure from Egypt, and all the great

transgressions of their fathers, which brought His judgments upon them, and compelled Him to say that they should not enter the Promised Land. Their fathers had died in the wilderness, according to the word of the Lord. Their children had grown up, and to them the promise was to be fulfilled of possessing the land of Canaan. Many of these were small children when the law was given, and they had no remembrance of the grandeur of the event. Others were born in the wilderness, and lest they should not realize the necessity of their obeying the Ten Commandments and all the laws and judgments given to Moses, he was instructed of God to recapitulate the Ten Commandments, and all the circumstances connected with the giving of the law.—The Story of Redemption, pp. 168, 170.

We cannot overestimate the value of simple faith and unquestioning obedience. It is by following in the path of obedience in simple faith that the character obtains perfection. Adam was required to render strict obedience to God's commandments, and no lower standard is presented to those who desire salvation [today]. . . . [Christ] says, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it. If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive." . . .

. . . The world is leagued against the truth, because it does not desire to obey the truth. Shall I who perceive the truth close my eyes and heart to its saving power because the world chooses darkness rather than light?—Letter 119, February 18, 1895.

God desires His people to prepare for the soon-coming crisis. Prepared or unprepared, they must all meet it; and those only who have brought their lives into conformity to the divine standard, will stand firm at that time of test and trial. When secular rulers unite with ministers of religion to dictate in matters of conscience, then it will be seen who really fear and serve God. When the darkness is deepest, the light of a godlike character will shine the brightest. When every other trust fails, then it will be seen who have an abiding trust in Jehovah. And while the enemies of truth are on every side, watching the Lord's servants for evil, God will watch over them for good. He will be to them as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.—The Acts of the Apostles, p. 431.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 01

Lift Him Up, "He Represents the Father," p. 36;

That I May Know Him, "The Mystery of Sin," p. 15.