

Ellen G. White 1874 Review and Herald

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"Redemption, No. 1"

After the baptism of Jesus in Jordan, he was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. When he had come up out of the water, he bowed upon Jordan's banks, and plead with the great Eternal for strength to endure the conflict with the fallen foe. The opening of the heavens, and the descent of the excellent glory, attested his divine character. The voice from the Father declared the close relation of Christ to his Infinite Majesty: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." The mission of Christ was soon to begin. But he must first withdraw from the busy scenes of life to a desolate wilderness for the express purpose of bearing the threefold test of temptation in behalf of those he had come to redeem.

Satan, who was once an honored angel in Heaven, had been ambitious for the more exalted honors which God had bestowed upon his Son. He became envious of Christ, and represented to the angels who honored him as covering cherub that he had not the honor conferred upon him which his position demanded. He asserted that he should be exalted equal in honor with God. Satan obtained sympathizers. Angels in Heaven joined him in his rebellion, and fell with their leader from their high and holy estate, and were therefore expelled with him from Heaven.

God, in counsel with his Son, formed the plan of creating man in their own image. He was placed upon probation. Man was to be tested and proved, and if he should bear the test of God, and remain loyal and true after the first trial, he was not to be beset with continual temptations; but was to be exalted equal with the angels, and henceforth immortal.

Adam and Eve came forth from the hand of their Creator in the perfection of every physical, mental, and spiritual endowment. God planted for them a garden, and surrounded them with everything lovely and attractive to the eye, and that which their physical necessities required. This holy pair looked out upon a world of unsurpassed loveliness and glory. A benevolent Creator had given them evidences of his goodness and love in providing them with fruits, vegetables, and grains, and had caused to grow out of the ground trees of every variety for usefulness and beauty.

The holy pair looked upon nature as a picture of unsurpassed loveliness. The brown earth was clothed with a carpet of living green, diversified with an endless variety of self-propagating, self-perpetuating flowers. Shrubs, flowers, and trailing vines, regaled the senses with their beauty and fragrance. The many varieties of lofty trees were laden with fruit of every kind, and of delicious flavor, adapted to please the taste and meet the wants of the happy Adam and Eve. This Eden home God provided for our first parents, giving them unmistakable evidences of his great love and care for them.

Adam was crowned as king in Eden. To him was given dominion over every living thing that God had created. The Lord blessed Adam and Eve with intelligence such as he had not given to the animal

creation. He made Adam the rightful sovereign over all the works of his hands. Man made in the divine image could contemplate and appreciate the glorious works of God in nature.

Adam and Eve could trace the skill and glory of God in every spire of grass, and in every shrub and flower. The natural loveliness which surrounded them, like a mirror reflected the wisdom, excellence, and love of their Heavenly Father. And their songs of affection and praise rose sweetly and reverentially to Heaven, harmonizing with the songs of the exalted angels, and with the happy birds who were caroling forth their music without a care. There was no disease, decay, nor death anywhere. Life, life was in everything the eye rested upon. The atmosphere was impregnated with life. Life was in every leaf, in every flower, and in every tree.

The Lord knew that Adam could not be happy without labor, therefore he gave him the pleasant employment of dressing the garden. And, as he tended the things of beauty and usefulness around him, he could behold the goodness and glory of God in his created works. Adam had themes for contemplation in the works of God in Eden, which was Heaven in miniature. God did not form man merely to contemplate his glorious works, therefore he gave him hands for labor, as well as a mind and heart for contemplation. If the happiness of man consisted in doing nothing, the Creator would not have given Adam his appointed work. In labor, man was to find happiness as well as in meditation. Adam could reflect that he was created in the image of God, to be like him in righteousness and holiness. His mind was capable of continual cultivation, expansion, refinement and noble elevation; for God was his teacher, and angels were his companions.

The Lord placed man upon probation, that he might form a character of steadfast integrity for his own happiness and for the glory of his Creator. He had endowed Adam with powers of mind superior to any living creature that he had made. His mental powers were but little lower than those of the angels. He could become familiar with the sublimity and glory of nature, and understand the character of his Heavenly Father in his created works. Everything that his eye rested upon in the immensity of the Father's works, provided with a lavish hand, testified of his love and infinite power. Amid the glories of Eden the goodness and wisdom of God were traced in everything the eye rested upon.

The first great moral lesson given Adam was that of self-denial. The reins of self-government were placed in his hands. Judgment, reason, and conscience, were to bear sway. "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

Adam and Eve were permitted to partake of every tree in the garden save one. There was only a single prohibition. The forbidden tree was as attractive and lovely as any of the trees in the garden. It was called the tree of knowledge, because in partaking of that tree, of which God had said "Thou shalt not eat of it," they would have a knowledge of sin, an experience in disobedience. Eve went from the side of her husband, viewing the beautiful things of nature in God's creation, delighting her senses with the colors and fragrance of the flowers and the beauty of the trees and shrubs. She was thinking of the restrictions God had laid upon them in regard to the tree of knowledge. She was pleased with the beauties and bounties which the Lord had furnished for the gratification of every want. All these, said she, God has given us to enjoy. They are all ours; for God has said, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it."

Eve had wandered near the forbidden tree, and her curiosity was aroused to know how death could be concealed in the fruit of this fair tree. She was surprised to hear her queries taken up and repeated by a strange voice. "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden." Eve was not aware that she had revealed her thoughts by conversing to herself aloud; therefore, she was greatly astonished to hear her queries repeated by a serpent. She really thought the serpent had a knowledge of her thoughts, and that he must be very wise. She answered him, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

Here the father of lies made his assertion in direct contradiction to the expressed word of God. Satan assured Eve that she was created immortal, and that there was no possibility of her dying. He told her that God knew that if they ate of the tree of knowledge their understanding would be enlightened, expanded, and ennobled, making them equal with himself. And the serpent answered Eve, that the command of God forbidding them to eat of the tree of knowledge was given them to keep them in a state of subordination, that they should not obtain knowledge, which was power. He assured her that the fruit of this tree was desirable above every other tree in the garden to make one wise and exalt them equal with God. He has, said the serpent, refused you the fruit of the tree which is of all the trees the most desirable for its delicious flavor and exhilarating influence. Eve thought the discourse of the serpent very wise. She viewed the prohibition of God unjust. She looked with longing desire upon the tree laden with fruit which appeared very delicious. The serpent was eating it with apparent delight. She longed for this fruit above all the fruit of every variety which God had given her a perfect right to use.

Eve had overstated the words of God's command. He had said to Adam and Eve, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." In Eve's controversy with the serpent, she added the clause, "Neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." Here the subtlety of the serpent was seen. This statement of Eve gave him advantage, and he plucked the fruit, and placed it in her hand, and used her own words, "He hath said, 'If ye touch it, ye shall die.' You see no harm comes to you from touching the fruit, neither will you receive any harm by eating it." Eve yielded to the lying sophistry of the devil in the form of a serpent. She ate the fruit, and realized no immediate harm. She then plucked the fruit for herself and for her husband. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat."

Adam and Eve should have been perfectly satisfied with the knowledge of God in his created works, and by the instruction of the holy angels. But their curiosity was aroused to become acquainted with that of which God designed they should have no knowledge. It was for their happiness to be ignorant of sin. The high state of knowledge to which they thought to attain by eating of the forbidden fruit plunged them into the degradation of sin and guilt.

The angels who had been appointed to guard Adam in his Eden home before his transgression and expulsion from paradise were now appointed to guard the gates of paradise and the way of the tree of life, lest he should return and gain access to the tree of life and sin be immortalized.

Sin drove man from paradise. And sin was the cause of paradise being removed from the earth. In consequence of transgression of God's law, Adam lost paradise. In obedience to the Father's law and through faith in the atoning blood of his Son, paradise may be regained. "Repentance toward God," because his law has been transgressed, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, as man's only Redeemer, will be acceptable with God. The merits of God's dear Son in man's behalf will avail with the Father, notwithstanding his sinfulness.

Satan was determined to succeed in his temptation with the sinless Adam and Eve. And he could reach even the holy pair more successfully through the medium of appetite than in any other way. The fruit of the forbidden tree seemed pleasant to the eye and desirable to the taste. They ate and fell. They transgressed God's just command and became sinners. Satan's triumph was complete. He then had the vantage ground over the race. He flattered himself that he had through his subtlety thwarted the purpose of God in the creation of man.

Satan made his exulting boasts to Christ and to loyal angels that he had succeeded in gaining a portion of the angels in Heaven to unite with him in his daring rebellion. And now that he had succeeded in overcoming Adam and Eve, he claimed that their Eden home was his. He proudly boasted that the world which God had made was his dominion. Having conquered Adam, the monarch of the world, he had gained the race as his subjects, and he should now possess Eden, and make that his headquarters. And he would there establish his throne, and be monarch of the world.

But measures were immediately taken in Heaven to defeat Satan in his plans. Strong angels, with beams of light representing flaming swords turning in every direction, were placed as sentinels to guard the way of the tree of life from the approach of Satan and the guilty pair. Adam and Eve had forfeited all right to their beautiful Eden home, and were now expelled from it. The earth was cursed because of Adam's sin, and was ever after to bring forth briers and thorns. Adam was to be exposed to the temptations of Satan while he lived, and was to finally pass through death to dust again.

A council was held in Heaven, which resulted in God's dear Son undertaking to redeem man from the curse and from the disgrace of Adam's failure, and to conquer Satan. Oh, wonderful condescension! The Majesty of Heaven, through love and pity for fallen man, proposed to become his substitute and surety. He would bear man's guilt. He would take the wrath of his Father upon himself, which otherwise would have fallen upon man because of his disobedience.

The law of God was unalterable. It could not be abolished, nor yield the smallest part of its claim to meet man in his fallen state. Man was separated from God by transgression of his expressed command, notwithstanding he had made known to Adam the consequences of such transgression. The sin of Adam brought a deplorable state of things. Satan would now have unlimited control over the race, unless a mightier being than Satan was before his fall should take the field and conquer him and ransom man.

Christ's divine soul was exercised with pity that was infinite for ruined man. As his wretched, helpless condition came up before him, and as he saw that by transgression of God's law he had fallen under the power and control of the prince of darkness, he proposed the only means that could be acceptable with God, that would give man another trial, and place him again on probation. Christ consented to leave his honor, his kingly authority, his glory with the Father, and humble himself to humanity, and engage in contest with the mighty prince of darkness in order to redeem man. Through his humiliation and poverty Christ would identify himself with the weaknesses of the fallen race, and by firm obedience

show man how to redeem Adam's disgraceful failure, that man by humble obedience might regain lost Eden.

The great work of redemption could be carried out only by the Redeemer taking the place of fallen Adam. With the sins of the world laid upon him, he would go over the ground where Adam stumbled. He would bear the test which Adam failed to endure, and which would be almost infinitely more severe than that brought to bear upon Adam. He would overcome on man's account, and conquer the tempter, that through his obedience, his purity of character and steadfast integrity, his righteousness might be imputed to man, that through his name man might overcome the foe on his own account.

What love! What amazing condescension! The King of glory proposed to humble himself to fallen humanity! He would place his feet in Adam's steps. He would take man's fallen nature and engage to cope with the strong foe who triumphed over Adam. He would overcome Satan, and in thus doing he would open the way for the redemption of those who would believe on him from the disgrace of Adam's failure and fall.

Angels on probation had been deceived by Satan, and had been led on by him in the great rebellion in Heaven against Christ. They failed to bear the test brought to bear upon them, and they fell. Adam was then created in the image of God and placed upon probation. He had a perfectly developed organism. All his faculties harmonized. In all his emotions, words, and actions there was a perfect conformity to the will of his Maker. After God had made every provision for the happiness of man, and had supplied his every want, he tested Adam's loyalty. If the holy pair should be obedient, the race would after a time be made equal to the angels. As Adam and Eve failed to bear this test, Christ proposed to become a voluntary offering for man.

Satan knew that if Christ was indeed the Son of God, the world's Redeemer, it was for no good to himself, that the Lord had left the royal courts of Heaven to come to a fallen world. He feared that his own power was henceforth to be limited, and that his deceptive wiles would be discerned and exposed, which would lessen his influence over man. He feared that his dominion and his control of the kingdoms of the world was to be contested. He remembered the words Jehovah addressed to him when he was summoned into his presence with Adam and Eve, whom he had ruined by his lying deceptions, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." This declaration contained the first gospel promise to man.

But these words at the time they were spoken were not fully understood by Satan. He knew that they contained a curse for him, because he had seduced the holy pair. And when Christ was manifested on the earth, Satan feared that he was indeed the One promised which should limit his power and finally destroy him.

Satan had peculiar interest to watch the development of events immediately after the fall of Adam to learn how his work had affected the kingdom of God, and what the Lord would do with Adam because of his disobedience. The Son of God, undertaking to become the Redeemer of the race, placed Adam in a new relation to his Creator. He was still fallen; but a door of hope was opened to him. The wrath of God still hung over Adam, but the execution of the sentence of death was delayed, and the indignation of God was restrained, because Christ had entered upon the work of becoming man's Redeemer. Christ was to take the wrath of God which in justice should fall upon man. He became a refuge for man, and although man was indeed a criminal, deserving the wrath of God, yet he could by faith in Christ run into

the refuge provided and be safe. In the midst of death there was life if man chose to accept it. The holy and infinite God, who dwelleth in light unapproachable, could no longer talk with man. No communication could now exist directly between man and his Maker.

God forbears for a time the full execution of the sentence of death pronounced upon man. Satan flattered himself that he had forever broken the link between Heaven and earth. But in this he was greatly mistaken and disappointed. The Father had given over the world into the hands of his Son for him to redeem from the curse and the disgrace of Adam's failure and fall. Through Christ alone can man now find access to God. And through Christ alone will the Lord hold communication with man.

Christ volunteered to maintain and vindicate the holiness of the divine law. He was not to do away the smallest part of its claims in the work of redemption for man, but in order to save man and maintain the sacred claims and justice of his Father's law, he gave himself a sacrifice for the guilt of man. Christ's life did not in a single instance detract from the claims of his Father's law, but through firm obedience to all its precepts, and by dying for the sins of those who had transgressed it, he established its immutability.

After the transgression of Adam, Satan saw that the ruin was complete. The human race was brought into a deplorable condition. Man was cut off from intercourse with God. It was Satan's design that the state of man should be the same with that of the fallen angels in rebellion against God, uncheered by a gleam of hope. He reasoned that if God pardoned sinful man whom he had created, he would also pardon and receive into favor him and his angels. But he was disappointed.

The divine Son of God saw that no arm but his own could save fallen man. He determined to help man. He left the fallen angels to perish in their rebellion, but stretched forth his hand to rescue perishing man. The angels who were rebellious were dealt with according to the light and experience they had abundantly enjoyed in Heaven. Satan, the chief of the fallen angels, once had an exalted position in Heaven. He was next in honor to Christ. The knowledge which he, as well as the angels who fell with him, had of the character of God, of his goodness, his mercy, wisdom, and excellent glory, made their guilt unpardonable.

There was no possible hope for those ever to be redeemed, who had witnessed and enjoyed the inexpressible glory of Heaven and had seen the terrible majesty of God, and, in presence of all this glory, had rebelled against him. There were no new and more wonderful exhibitions of God's exalted power that could ever impress them as deeply as those they had already experienced. If they could rebel in the very presence of the weight of glory inexpressible, they could not be placed in any more favorable condition to be proved. There was no reserve force of power, nor were there any greater heights and depths of infinite glory to overpower their jealous doubts and rebellious murmuring. Their guilt and their punishment must be in proportion to their exalted privileges in the heavenly courts. By Ellen G. White.

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"Redemption, No. 2"

Fallen man, because of his guilt, could no longer come directly before God with his supplications, for his transgression of the divine law had placed an impassable barrier between the holy God and the transgressor. But a plan was devised that the sentence of death should rest upon a substitute of superior value to the law of God. In the plan of redemption there must be the shedding of blood, for death must come in consequence of man's sin. The beasts for sacrificial offerings were to prefigure Christ. In the slain victim, man was to see the fulfillment for the time being of God's word, "Ye shall surely die." And the flowing of the blood from the victim would also signify an atonement. There was no virtue in the blood of animals; but the shedding of the blood of beasts was to point forward to a Redeemer who would one day come to the world and die for the sins of men. And thus Christ would fully vindicate his Father's law.

Satan with intense interest watched every event in regard to the sacrificial offerings. The devotion and solemnity connected with the shedding of the blood of the victim caused him great uneasiness. This ceremony to him was clothed with mystery; but he was not a dull scholar, and he soon learned that the sacrificial offerings typified some future atonement for man. He saw that these offerings signified repentance for sin. This did not agree with his purposes, and he at once commenced to work upon the heart of Cain to lead him to rebellion against the sacrificial offering which prefigured a Redeemer to come.

Adam's repentance, evidenced in his sorrow for his transgression, and his hope of salvation through Christ shown by his works in the sacrifices offered, was a disappointment to Satan. He hoped forever to gain Adam to unit with him in murmuring against God, and in rebelling against his authority. Here were the representatives of the two great classes. Abel as priest offered in solemn faith his sacrifice. Cain was willing to offer the fruit of his ground, but refused to connect with his offering the blood of beasts. His heart refused to show his repentance for sin and his faith in a Saviour by offering the blood of beasts. He refused to acknowledge his need of a Redeemer. This to his proud heart was dependence and humiliation.

But Abel by faith in a future Redeemer offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain. His offering the blood of beasts signified that he was a sinner and had sins to wash away, and that he was penitent and believed in the efficacy of the blood of the future great offering. Satan is the parent of unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion. He filled Cain with doubt and with madness against his innocent brother and against God, because his sacrifice was refused and Abel's accepted. And he slew his brother in his insane madness.

The sacrificial offerings were instituted to be a standing pledge to man of God's pardon through the great offering to be made, typified by the blood of beasts. Through this ceremony man signified repentance, obedience, and faith in a Redeemer to come. That which made Cain's offering offensive to God was his lack of submission and obedience to the ordinance of his appointment. He thought his own plans in offering to God merely the fruit of the ground was nobler, and not as humiliating as the offering of the blood of beasts which showed a dependence upon another, thus expressing his own weakness and sinfulness. Cain slighted the blood of the atonement.

Adam in transgressing the law of Jehovah had opened the door for Satan, and he had planted his banner in the midst of his own family. He was made to feel indeed that the wages of sin is death. Satan

designed to gain Eden by deceiving our first parents; but in this he was disappointed. Instead of securing to himself Eden, he now feared that he would lose all he had claimed out of Eden. His sagacity could trace the signification of these offerings, that they pointed man forward to a Redeemer, and were a typical atonement for the time being for the sin of fallen man, opening a door of hope to the race.

The rebellion of Satan against God was most determined. He worked to war against the kingdom of God with perseverance and fortitude worthy of a better cause.

The world had become so corrupt through indulgence of appetite and debased passions in the days of Noah that God was provoked to destroy its inhabitants by the waters of the flood. As men again multiplied upon the earth, the indulgence of wine to intoxication perverted the senses, and prepared the way for excessive meat eating and the strengthening of the animal passions. Men lifted themselves up against the God of Heaven. And their faculties and opportunities were devoted to glorifying themselves rather than honoring their Creator. Satan found easy access to the hearts of men. He is a diligent student of the Bible, and is much better acquainted with the prophecies than many religious teachers. He knows that it is for his interest to keep well informed in the revealed purposes of God, that he may defeat the plans of the Infinite. So infidels study the Scriptures frequently more diligently than some who profess to be guided by them. Some of the ungodly search the Scriptures that they may become familiar with Bible truth, and furnish themselves with arguments to make it appear that the Bible contradicts itself. And many professed Christians are so ignorant of the word of God, through neglect of its study, that they are blinded by the deceptive reasoning of those who pervert sacred truth, that they may turn souls away from the counsel of God in his word.

Satan saw in the typical offerings an expected Redeemer who was to ransom man from his control. He laid his plans deep to rule the hearts of men from generation to generation, and to blind their understanding of the prophecies, that when Jesus should come, the people would refuse to accept him as their Saviour.

God appointed Moses to lead out his people from their bondage in the land of Egypt, that they might consecrate themselves to serve him with perfect hearts, and be to him a peculiar treasure. Moses was their visible leader, while Christ stood at the head of the armies of Israel, their invisible leader. If they could have always realized this, they would not have rebelled and provoked God in the wilderness by their unreasonable murmurings. God said to Moses, "Behold I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions; for my name is in him."

When Christ as the guiding, guarding angel condescended to lead the armies of Israel through the wilderness to Canaan, Satan was provoked, for he felt that his power could not so well control them. But as he saw that the armies of Israel were easily influenced and incited to rebellion by his suggestions, he hoped to lead them to murmuring and sin which would bring upon them the wrath of God. And as he saw that his power was submitted to by men, he became bold in his temptations, inciting to crime and violence. Through Satan's devices, each generation was becoming more feeble in physical, mental, and moral power. This gave him courage to think that he might succeed in his warfare against Christ in person when he should be manifested. He has the dominion of death.

Some few in every generation from Adam resisted his every artifice and stood forth as noble representatives of what it was in the power of man to do and to be--Christ working with human efforts,

helping man in overcoming the power of Satan. Enoch and Elijah are the correct representatives of what the race might be through faith in Jesus Christ if they chose to be. Satan was greatly disturbed because these noble, holy men stood untainted amid the moral pollution surrounding them, perfected righteous characters, and were accounted worthy for translation to Heaven. As they had stood forth in moral power in noble uprightness, overcoming Satan's temptations, he could not bring them under the dominion of death. He triumphed that he had power to overcome Moses with his temptations, and that he could mar his illustrious character and lead him to the sin of taking glory to himself before the people which belonged to God.

Christ resurrected Moses and took him to heaven. This enraged Satan, and he accused the Son of God of invading his dominion by robbing the grave of his lawful prey. Jude says of the resurrection of Moses, "Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee."

When Satan succeeds in tempting men, whom God has especially honored, to commit grievous sins, he triumphs; for he has gained to himself a great victory and done harm to the kingdom of Christ.

At the birth of Christ, Satan saw the plains of Bethlehem illuminated with the brilliant glory of a multitude of heavenly angels. He heard their song, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men." The prince of darkness saw the amazed shepherds filled with fear as they beheld the illuminated plains. They trembled before the exhibitions of bewildering glory which seemed to entrance their senses. The rebel chief himself trembled at the proclamation of the angel to the shepherds, "Fear not; for, behold, I bring to you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." He had met with so good success in devising a plan to ruin men that he had become bold and powerful. He had controlled the minds and bodies of men from Adam down to the first appearing of Christ. But now Satan was troubled and alarmed for his kingdom and his life.

The song of the heavenly messengers proclaiming the advent of the Saviour to a fallen world, and the joy expressed at this great event Satan knew boded no good to himself. Dark forebodings were awakened in his mind as to the influence this advent to the world would have upon his kingdom. He queried if this was not the coming One who would contest his power and overthrow his kingdom. He looked upon Christ from his birth as his rival. He stirred the envy and jealousy of Herod to destroy Christ by insinuating to him that his power and his kingdom were to be given to this new king. Satan imbued Herod with the very feelings and fears that disturbed his own mind. He inspired the corrupt mind of Herod to invent a plan which he thought would succeed in ridding the earth of the infant king, by slaying all the children from two years old and under in Bethlehem.

But against his plans, Satan sees a higher power at work. Angels of God protected the life of the infant Redeemer. Joseph was warned in a dream to flee into Egypt, that in a heathen land he may find an asylum for the world's Redeemer. Satan followed him from infancy to childhood and from childhood to manhood, inventing means and ways to allure him from his allegiance to God, and overcome him with his subtle temptations. The unsullied purity of the childhood, youth, and manhood, of Christ which Satan could not taint annoyed him exceedingly. All his darts and arrows of temptation fell harmless before the Son of God. And when he found that all his temptations prevailed nothing in moving Christ from his steadfast integrity, or in marring the spotless purity of the youthful Galilean, he was perplexed and enraged. He looked upon this youth as an enemy that he must dread and fear.

That there should be one who walked the earth with moral power to withstand all his temptations, who resisted all his attractive bribes to allure him to sin, and over whom he could obtain no advantage to separate from God, chafed and enraged his Satanic majesty.

The childhood, youth, and manhood, of John, who came in the spirit and power of Elijah to do a special work in preparing the way for the world's Redeemer, was marked with firmness and moral power. Satan could not move him from his integrity. When the voice of this prophet was heard in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." Satan was afraid for his kingdom. He felt that the voice sounding forth in trumpet tones in the wilderness caused sinners under his control to tremble. He saw that his power over many was broken. The sinfulness of sin was revealed in such a manner that men became alarmed, and some, by repentance of their sins, found the favor of God and gained moral power to resist his temptations.

He was on the ground at the time when Christ presented himself to John for baptism. He heard the majestic voice resounding through heaven and echoing through the earth like peals of thunder. He saw the lightnings flash from the cloudless heavens, and heard the fearful words from Jehovah, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." He saw the brightness of the Father's glory overshadowing the form of Jesus, thus, with unmistakable assurance, pointing out the One in that crowd whom he acknowledged as his Son. The circumstances connected with this baptismal scene had aroused the most intense hatred in the breast of Satan. He knew then for a certainty that, unless he could overcome Christ, from henceforth there would be a limitation of his power. He understood that the communication from the throne of God signified that Heaven was more directly accessible to man.

As Satan had led man to sin, he had hoped that God's abhorrence of sin would forever separate him from man, and break the connecting link between Heaven and earth. But the opening heavens in connection with the voice of God addressing his Son was like a death knell to Satan. He feared that God was now to unite man more fully to himself, and give him power to overcome his devices. And for this purpose, Christ had come from the royal courts to the earth. Satan was well acquainted with the position of honor Christ had held in Heaven as the Son of God, the beloved of the Father. And that he should leave Heaven and come to this world as a man filled him with apprehension for his own safety. He could not comprehend the mystery of this great sacrifice for the benefit of fallen man. He knew well the value of Heaven far exceeded the anticipation and appreciation of fallen man. The most costly treasures of the world he knew would not compare with its worth. As he had lost through his rebellion all the riches and pure glories of Heaven, he was determined to be revenged by causing as many he could to undervalue Heaven and to place their affections upon earthly treasures.

It was incomprehensible to the selfish soul of Satan that there could exist benevolence and love for the deceived race so great as to induce the Prince of Heaven to leave his home and come to a world marred with sin and seared with the curse. He had knowledge of the inestimable value of eternal riches that man had not. He had experienced the pure contentment, the peace and exalted holiness of unalloyed joys of the heavenly abode. He had realized before his rebellion the satisfaction of the full approval of God. He had once a full appreciation of the glory that enshrouded the Father, and knew that there was no limit to his power.

Satan knew what he had lost. He now feared that his empire over the world was to be contested, his right disputed, and his power broken. He knew through prophecy, that a Savior was predicted and that his kingdom would not be established in earthly triumph and with worldly honor and display. He knew

that ancient prophecies foretold a kingdom to be established by the Prince of Heaven upon the earth, which he claimed as his dominion. His kingdom would embrace all the kingdoms of the world, and then his power and his glory would cease and he receive his retribution for the sins he had introduced into the world and for the misery he had brought upon man. He knew that everything which concerned his prosperity was pending upon his success or failure in overcoming Christ with his temptations in the wilderness. He brought to bear upon Christ every artifice and force of his powerful temptations to allure him from his allegiance. By Ellen G. White.

Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, July 28, 1874

(Vol. 44, #7)

"The Temptation of Christ"--1

Christ was not in as favorable a position in the desolate wilderness to endure the temptations of Satan as was Adam when he was tempted in Eden. The Son of God humbled himself and took man's nature after the race had wandered four thousand years from Eden, and from their original state of purity and uprightness. Sin had been making its terrible marks upon the race for ages; and physical, mental, and moral degeneracy prevailed throughout the human family.

When Adam was assailed by the tempter in Eden he was without the taint of sin. He stood in the strength of his perfection before God. All the organs and faculties of his being were equally developed, and harmoniously balanced.

Christ, in the wilderness of temptation, stood in Adam's place to bear the test he failed to endure. Here Christ overcame in the sinner's behalf, four thousand years after Adam turned his back upon the light of his home. Separated from the presence of God, the human family had been departing every successive generation, farther from the original purity, wisdom, and knowledge which Adam possessed in Eden. Christ bore the sins and infirmities of the race as they existed when he came to the earth to help man. In behalf of the race, with the weaknesses of fallen man upon him, he was to stand the temptations of Satan upon all points wherewith man would be assailed.

Adam was surrounded with everything his heart could wish. Every want was supplied. There was no sin, and no signs of decay in glorious Eden. Angels of God conversed freely and lovingly with the holy pair. The happy songsters caroled forth their free, joyous songs of praise to their Creator. The peaceful beasts in happy innocence played about Adam and Eve, obedient to their word. Adam was in the perfection of manhood, the noblest of the Creator's work. He was in the image of God, but a little lower than the angels.

In what contrast is the second Adam as he entered the gloomy wilderness to cope with Satan single-handed. Since the fall the race had been decreasing in size and physical strength, and sinking lower in the scale of moral worth, up to the period of Christ's advent to the earth. And in order to elevate fallen man, Christ must reach him where he was. He took human nature, and bore the infirmities and

degeneracy of the race. He, who knew no sin, became sin for us. He humiliated himself to the lowest depths of human woe, that he might be qualified to reach man, and bring him up from the degradation in which sin had plunged him.

"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

"Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."

"For we have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

Satan had been at war with the government of God, since he first rebelled. His success in tempting Adam and Eve in Eden, and introducing sin into the world, had emboldened this arch foe, and he had proudly boasted to the heavenly angels that when Christ should appear, taking man's nature, he would be weaker than himself, and he would overcome him by his power. He exulted that Adam and Eve in Eden could not resist his insinuations when he appealed to their appetite. The inhabitants of the old world he overcame in the same manner, through the indulgence of lustful appetite and corrupt passions. Through the gratification of appetite he had overthrown the Israelites. He boasted that the Son of God himself who was with Moses and Joshua was not able to resist his power, and lead the favored people of his choice to Canaan; for nearly all who left Egypt died in the wilderness. Also the meek man, Moses, he had tempted to take to himself glory which God claimed. David and Solomon, who had been especially favored of God, he had induced, through the indulgence of appetite and passion, to incur God's displeasure. And he boasted that he could yet succeed in thwarting the purpose of God in the salvation of man through Jesus Christ.

In the wilderness of temptation Christ was without food forty days. Moses had, on especial occasions, been thus long without food. But he felt not the pangs of hunger. He was not tempted and harassed by a vile and powerful foe, as was the Son of God. He was elevated above the human. He was especially sustained by the glory of God which enshrouded him.

Satan had succeeded so well in deceiving the angels of God, and in the fall of noble Adam, that he thought that in Christ's humiliation he should be successful in overcoming him. He looked with pleased exultation upon the result of his temptations and the increase of sin in the continued transgression of God's law for more than four thousand years. He had worked the ruin of our first parents, and brought sin and death into the world, and had led to ruin multitudes of all ages, countries, and classes. He had, by his power, controlled cities and nations until their sin provoked the wrath of God to destroy them by fire, water, earthquakes, sword, famine and pestilence. By his subtlety and untiring efforts he had controlled the appetite and excited and strengthened the passions, to so fearful a degree, that he had defaced, and almost obliterated the image of God in man. His physical and moral dignity were in so great a degree destroyed, that he bore but a faint resemblance in character, and noble perfection of form, to dignified Adam in Eden.

At the first advent of Christ, Satan had brought man down from his original, exalted purity, and had dimmed the fine gold with sin. He had transformed the man, created to be a sovereign in Eden, to a slave in the earth, groaning under the curse of sin. The halo of glory, which God had given holy Adam, covering him as a garment, departed from him after his transgression. The light of God's glory could not cover disobedience and sin. In the place of health and plentitude of blessings, poverty, sickness, and suffering of every type, were to be the portion of the children of Adam.

Satan had, through his seductive power, led men to vain philosophy to question and finally to disbelieve in divine revelation and the existence of God. He could look abroad upon a world of moral wretchedness, and a race exposed to the wrath of a sin avenging God, with fiendish triumph that he had been as successful in darkening the pathway of so many, and had led them to transgress the law of God. He clothed sin with pleasing attractions to secure the ruin of many.

But his most successful scheme in deceiving man has been to conceal his real purposes, and his true character, by representing himself as man's friend and a benefactor of the race. He flatters men with the pleasing fable that there is no rebellious foe, no deadly enemy that they need to guard against, and that the existence of a personal devil is all a fiction. While he thus hides his existence, he is gathering thousands under his control. He is deceiving them, as he tried to deceive Christ, that he is an angel from Heaven doing a good work for humanity. And the masses are so blinded by sin that they cannot discern the devices of Satan, and they honor him as they would a heavenly angel, while he is working their eternal ruin. By Ellen G. White. (To be Continued.)

Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, August 4, 1874

(Vol. 44, #8)

"The Temptation of Christ (Continued)"--2

Christ had entered the world as Satan's destroyer, and the Redeemer of the captives bound by his power. He would leave an example in his own victorious life for man to follow and overcome the temptations of Satan. As soon as Christ entered the wilderness of temptation, his visage changed. The glory and splendor reflected from the throne of God which illuminated his countenance when the heavens opened before him, and the Father's voice acknowledged him as his Son in whom he was well pleased, was now gone. The weight of the sins of the world was pressing his soul, and his countenance expressed unutterable sorrow, a depth of anguish that fallen man had never realized. He felt the overwhelming tide of woe that deluged the world. He realized the strength of indulged appetite and of unholy passion that controlled the world, which had brought upon man inexpressible suffering. The indulgence of appetite had been increasing, and strengthening with every successive generation since Adam's transgression, until the race was so feeble in moral power that they could not overcome in their own strength. Christ, in behalf of the race, was to overcome appetite, by standing the most powerful test upon this point. He was to tread the path of temptation alone, and there must be none to help him, none to comfort or uphold him. He was to wrestle with the powers of darkness.

As man could not, in his human strength resist the power of Satan's temptations, Jesus volunteered to undertake the work, and bear the burden for man, and overcome the power of appetite in his behalf. He must show in man's behalf, self-denial and perseverance, and firmness of principle that is paramount to the gnawing pangs of hunger. He must show a power of control over appetite stronger than hunger and even death.

When Christ bore the test of temptation upon the point of appetite, he did not stand in beautiful Eden, as did Adam, with the light and love of God seen in everything his eye rested upon. But he was in a barren, desolate wilderness, surrounded with wild beasts. Everything around him was repulsive, and from which human nature would be inclined to shrink. With these surroundings he fasted forty days and forty nights, "and in those days he ate nothing." He was emaciated through long fasting, and felt the keenest sense of hunger. His visage was indeed marred more than the sons of men.

Christ thus entered upon his life of conflict to overcome the mighty foe, in bearing the very test Adam failed to endure, that, through successful conflict, he might break the power of Satan, and redeem the race from the disgrace of the fall.

All was lost when Adam yielded to the power of appetite. The Redeemer, in whom was united both the human and the divine, stood in Adam's place, and endured a terrible fast of nearly six weeks. The length of this fast is the strongest evidence of the extent of the sinfulness and power of debased appetite upon the human family.

The humanity of Christ reached to the very depths of human wretchedness, and, identified itself with the weaknesses and necessities of fallen man, while his divine nature grasped the Eternal. His work in bearing the guilt of man's transgression was not to give him license to continue to violate the law of God, which made man a debtor to the law, which debt Christ was himself paying by his own suffering. The trials and sufferings of Christ were to impress man with a sense of his great sin in breaking the law of God, and to bring him to repentance and obedience to that law, and through obedience to acceptance with God. His righteousness he would impute to man, and thus raise him in moral value with God, so that his efforts to keep the divine law would be acceptable. Christ's work was to reconcile man to God through his human nature, and God to man through his divine nature.

As soon as the long fast of Christ commenced in the wilderness, Satan was at hand with his temptations. He came to Christ, enshrouded in light, claiming to be one of the angels from the throne of God, sent upon an errand of mercy to sympathize with him, and to relieve him of his suffering condition. He tried to make Christ believe that God did not require him to pass through self-denial and the sufferings he anticipated; that he had been sent from Heaven to bear to him the message that God only designed to prove his willingness to endure.

Satan told Christ that he was only to set his feet in the bloodstained path, but not to travel it. Like Abraham he was tested to show his perfect obedience. He also stated that he was the angel that stayed the hand of Abraham as the knife was raised to slay Isaac, and he had now come to save his life; that it was not necessary for him to endure the painful hunger and death from starvation; he would help him bear a part of the work in the plan of salvation.

The Son of God turned from all these artful temptations, and was steadfast in his purpose to carry out in every particular, in the spirit and in the very letter, the plan which had been devised for the

redemption of the fallen race. But Satan had manifold temptations prepared to ensnare Christ, and obtain advantage of him. If he failed in one temptation, he would try another. He thought he would succeed, because Christ had humbled himself as a man. He flattered himself that his assumed character, as one of the heavenly angels, could not be discerned. He feigned to doubt the divinity of Christ, because of his emaciated appearance and unpleasant surroundings.

Christ knew that in taking the nature of man he would not be in appearance equal to the angels of Heaven. Satan urged that if he was indeed the Son of God he should give him evidence of his exalted character. He approached Christ with temptations upon appetite. He had overcome Adam upon this point and he had controlled his descendants, and through indulgence of appetite led them to provoke God by iniquity, until their crimes were so great that the Lord destroyed them from off the earth by the waters of the flood.

Under Satan's direct temptations the children of Israel suffered appetite to control reason, and they were, through indulgence, led to commit grievous sins which awakened the wrath of God against them, and they fell in the wilderness. He thought that he should be successful in overcoming Christ with the same temptation. He told Christ that one of the exalted angels had been exiled to the world, and that his appearance indicated that, instead of his being the king of Heaven, he was the angel fallen, and this explained his emaciated and distressed appearance.

He then called the attention of Christ to his own attractive appearance, clothed with light and strong in power. He claimed to be a messenger direct from the throne of Heaven, and asserted that he had a right to demand of Christ evidences of his being the Son of God. Satan would fain disbelieve, if he could, the words that came from Heaven to the Son of God at his baptism. He determined to overcome Christ, and, if possible, make his own kingdom and life secure. His first temptation to Christ was upon appetite. He had, upon this point almost entire control of the world, and his temptations were adapted to the circumstances and surroundings of Christ, which made his temptations upon appetite almost overpowering.

Christ could have worked a miracle on his own account; but this would not have been in accordance with the plan of salvation. The many miracles in the life of Christ show his power to work miracles for the benefit of suffering humanity. By a miracle of mercy he fed five thousand at once with five loaves and two small fishes. Therefore he had power to work a miracle, and satisfy his own hunger. Satan flattered himself that he could lead Christ to doubt the words spoken from Heaven at his baptism. And if he could tempt him to question his sonship, and doubt the truth of the word spoken by his Father, he would gain a great victory.

He found Christ in the desolate wilderness without companions, without food, and in actual suffering. His surroundings were most melancholy and repulsive. Satan suggested to Christ that God would not leave his Son in this condition of want and real suffering. He hoped to shake the confidence of Christ in his Father, who had permitted him to be brought into this condition of extreme suffering in the desert, where the feet of man had never trod. Satan hoped to insinuate doubts as to his Father's love that would find a lodgment in the mind of Christ, and that under the force of despondency and extreme hunger he would exert his miraculous power in his own behalf, and take himself out of the hands of his Heavenly Father. This was indeed a temptation to Christ. But he cherished it not for a moment. He did not for a single moment doubt his Heavenly Father's love, although he seemed to be bowed down with

inexpressible anguish. Satan's temptations, though skillfully devised, did not move the integrity of God's dear Son. His abiding confidence in his Father could not be shaken. By Ellen G. White. (To be Continued.

Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, August 18, 1874

(Vol. 44, #9)

"The Temptation of Christ (Continued)"--3

Jesus did not condescend to explain to his enemy how he was the Son of God, and in what manner, as such, he was to act. In an insulting, taunting manner Satan referred to the present weakness and the unfavorable appearance of Christ in contrast with his own strength and glory. He taunted Christ that he was a poor representative of the angels, much more of their exalted Commander, the acknowledged King in the royal courts. His present appearance indicated that he was forsaken of God and man. He said if Christ was indeed the Son of God, the monarch of Heaven, he had power equal with God, and he could give him evidence by working a miracle, and changing the stone just at his feet into bread, and relieve his hunger. Satan promised that, if Christ would do this, he would at once yield his claims of superiority, and that the contest between himself and Christ should there be forever ended.

Christ did not appear to notice the reviling taunts of Satan. He was not provoked to give him proofs of his power. He meekly bore his insults without retaliation. The words spoken from Heaven at his baptism were very precious, evidencing to him that his Father approved the steps he was taking in the plan of salvation as man's substitute and surety. The opening heavens, and descent of the heavenly dove, were assurances that his Father would unite his power in Heaven with that of his Son upon the earth, to rescue man from the control of Satan, and that God accepted the effort of Christ to link earth to Heaven, and finite man to the infinite.

These tokens, received from his Father, were inexpressibly precious to the Son of God through all his severe sufferings, and terrible conflict with the rebel chief. And while enduring the test of God in the wilderness, and through his entire ministry, he had nothing to do in convincing Satan of his own power, and of his being the Saviour of the World. Satan had sufficient evidence of his exalted station. His unwillingness to ascribe to Jesus the honor due to him, and manifest submission as a subordinate, ripened into rebellion against God, and shut him out of Heaven.

It was not any part of the mission of Christ to exercise his divine power for his own benefit, to relieve himself from suffering. This he had volunteered to take upon himself. He had condescended to take man's nature, and he was to suffer the inconveniences, and ills, and afflictions, of the human family. He was not to perform miracles on his own account. He came to save others. The object of his mission was to bring blessings, and hope, and life, to the afflicted and oppressed. He was to bear the burdens and griefs of suffering humanity.

Although Christ was suffering the keenest pangs of hunger, he withstood the temptations. He repulsed Satan with Scripture, the same he had given Moses in the wilderness to repeat to rebellious

Israel when their diet was restricted, and they were clamoring for flesh meats, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." In this declaration, and also by his example, Christ would show man that hunger for temporal food was not the greatest calamity that could befall him. Satan flattered our first parents that eating of the fruit of the tree of life of which God had forbidden them would bring to them great good, and would insure them against death, the very opposite of the truth which God had declared to them. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." If Adam had been obedient, he would never have known want, sorrow, nor death.

If the people who lived before the flood had been obedient to the word of God, they would have been preserved, and would not have perished by the waters of the flood. If the Israelites had been obedient to the words of God, he would have bestowed upon them special blessings. But they fell in consequence of the indulgence of appetite and passion. They would not be obedient to the words of God. Indulgence of perverted appetite led them into numerous and grievous sins. If they had made the requirements of God their first consideration, and their physical wants secondary, in submission to God's choice of proper food for them, not one of them would have fallen in the wilderness. They would have been established in the goodly land of Canaan a holy, healthy people, with not a feeble one in all their tribes.

The Saviour of the world became sin for the race. In becoming man's substitute, Christ did not manifest his power as the Son of God. He ranked himself among the sons of men. He was to bear the trial of temptation as a man, in man's behalf, under the most trying circumstances, and leave an example of faith and perfect trust in his Heavenly Father. Christ knew that his Father would supply him food when it would gratify him to do so. He would not in this severe ordeal, when hunger pressed him beyond measure, prematurely diminish one particle of the trial allotted to him by exercising his divine power.

Fallen man, when brought into straightened places, could not have the power to work miracles on his own behalf, to save himself from pain or anguish, or to give himself victory over his enemies. It was the purpose of God to test and prove the race, and give them an opportunity to develop character by bringing them frequently into trying positions to test their faith and confidence in his love and power. The life of Christ was a perfect pattern. He was ever, by his example and precept, teaching man that God was his dependence, and that in God should be his faith and firm trust.

Christ knew that Satan was a liar from the beginning, and it required strong self-control to listen to the propositions of this insulting deceiver, and not instantly rebuke his bold assumptions. Satan expected to provoke the Son of God to engage in controversy with him; and he hoped that thus, in his extreme weakness and agony of spirit, he could obtain advantage, over him. He designed to pervert the words of Christ and claim advantage, and call to his aid his fallen angels to use their utmost power to prevail against and overcome him.

The Saviour of the world had no controversy with Satan, who was expelled from Heaven because he was no longer worthy of a place there. He who could influence the angels of God against their Supreme Ruler, and against his Son, their loved commander, and enlist their sympathy for himself, was capable of any deception. Four thousand years he had been warring against the government of God, and had lost none of his skill or power to tempt and deceive.

Because man fallen could not overcome Satan with his human strength, Christ came from the royal courts of Heaven to help him with his human and divine strength combined. Christ knew that Adam in Eden, with his superior advantages, might have withstood the temptations of Satan, and conquered him. He also knew that it was not possible for man, out of Eden, separated from the light and love of God since the fall, to resist the temptations of Satan in his own strength. In order to bring hope to man, and save him from complete ruin, he humbled himself to take man's nature, that, with his divine power combined with the human, he might reach man where he is. He obtains for the fallen sons and daughters of Adam that strength which it is impossible for them to gain for themselves, that in his name they may overcome the temptations of Satan.

The exalted Son of God in assuming humanity draws himself nearer to man by standing as the sinner's substitute. He identifies himself with the sufferings and afflictions of men. He was tempted in all points as a man is tempted, that he might know how to succor those who should be tempted. Christ overcame on the sinner's behalf.

Jacob, in the night vision, saw earth connected with Heaven by a ladder reaching to the throne of God. He saw the angels of God, clothed with garments of heavenly brightness, passing down from Heaven and up to Heaven upon this shining ladder. The bottom of this ladder rested upon the earth, while the top of it reached to the highest Heavens, and rested upon the throne of Jehovah. The brightness from the throne of God beamed down upon this ladder, and reflected a light of inexpressible glory upon the earth.

This ladder represented Christ who had opened the communication between earth and Heaven. In Christ's humiliation he descended to the very depth of human woe in sympathy and pity for fallen man, which was represented to Jacob by one end of the ladder resting upon the earth, while the top of the ladder, reaching unto Heaven, represents the divine power of Christ, who grasps the Infinite, and thus links earth to Heaven, and finite man to the infinite God. Through Christ the communication is opened between God and man. Angels may pass from Heaven to earth with messages of love to fallen man, and to minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation. It is through Christ alone that the heavenly messengers minister to men.

Adam and Eve in Eden were placed under most favorable circumstances. It was their privilege to hold communion with God and angels. They were without the condemnation of sin. The light of God and angels was with them, and around about them. The Author of their existence was their teacher. But they fell beneath the power and temptations of the artful foe. Four thousand years had Satan been at work against the government of God, and he had obtained strength and experience from determined practice. Fallen men had not the advantages of Adam in Eden. They had been separating from God for four thousand years. The wisdom to understand, and power to resist, the temptations of Satan had become less and less, until Satan seemed to reign triumphant in the earth. Appetite and passion, the love of the world and presumptuous sins, were the great branches of evil out of which every species of crime, violence, and corruption grew.

Satan was defeated in his object to overcome Christ upon the point of appetite; and here in the wilderness Christ achieved a victory in behalf of the race upon the point of appetite, making it possible for man in all future time in his name to overcome the strength of appetite on his own behalf. Satan was not willing to cease efforts until he had tried every means to obtain victory over the world's Redeemer. He knew that with himself all was at stake, whether he or Christ should be victor in the contest. And, in

order to awe Christ with his superior strength, he carried him to Jerusalem and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and continued to beset him with temptations.

He again demanded of Christ, if he was indeed the Son of God, to give him evidence by casting himself from the dizzy height upon which he had placed him. He urged Christ to show his confidence in the preserving care of his Father by casting himself down from the temple. In Satan's first temptation upon the point of appetite, he had tried to insinuate doubts in regard to God's love and care for Christ as his Son, by presenting his surroundings and his hunger as evidence that he was not in favor with God. He was unsuccessful in this. He next tried to take advantage of the faith and perfect trust Christ had shown in his Heavenly Father to urge him to presumption. "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." Jesus promptly answered, "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

The sin of presumption lies close beside the virtue of perfect faith and confidence in God. Satan flattered himself that he could take advantage of the humanity of Christ to urge him over the line of trust to presumption. Upon this point many souls are wrecked. Satan tried to deceive Christ through flattery. He admitted that Christ was right in the wilderness in his faith and confidence that God was his Father, under the most trying circumstances. He then urged Christ to give him one more proof of his entire dependence upon God, one more evidence of his faith that he was the Son of God, by casting himself from the temple. He told Christ that if he was indeed the Son of God he had nothing to fear; for angels were at hand to uphold him. Satan gave evidence that he understood the Scriptures by the use he made of them.

The Redeemer of the world wavered not from his integrity and showed that he had perfect faith in his Father's promised care. He would not put the faithfulness and love of his Father to a needless trial, although he was in the hands of the enemy, and placed in a position of extreme difficulty and peril. He would not, at Satan's suggestion, tempt God by presumptuously experimenting on his providence. Satan had brought in scripture which seemed appropriate for the occasion, hoping to accomplish his designs by making the application to our Saviour at this special time.

Christ knew that God could indeed bear him up if he had required him to throw himself from the temple. But to do this unbidden, and to experiment upon his Father's protecting care and love, because dared by Satan to do so, would not show his strength of faith. Satan was well aware that if Christ could be prevailed upon, unbidden by his Father, to fling himself from the temple to prove his claim to his Heavenly Father's protecting care, he would in the very act show the weakness of his human nature.

Christ came off victor in the second temptation. He manifested perfect confidence and trust in his Father during his severe conflict with the powerful foe. Our Redeemer, in the victory here gained, has left man a perfect pattern, showing him that his only safety is in firm trust and unwavering confidence in God in all trials and perils. He refused to presume upon the mercy of his Father by placing himself in peril that would make it necessary for his Heavenly Father to display his power to save him from danger. This would be forcing providence on his own account: and he would not then leave for his people a perfect example of faith and firm trust in God.

Satan's object in tempting Christ was to lead him to daring presumption, and to show human weakness that would not make him a perfect pattern for his people. Satan thought that should Christ fail

to bear the test of his temptations, there could be no redemption for the race, and his power over them would be complete. By Ellen G. White. (To be Continued.)

Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, August 25, 1874

(Vol. 44, #10)

"Tithes and Offerings"

Divine wisdom has appointed, in the plan of salvation, the law of action and reaction, making the work of beneficence, in all its branches, twice blessed.

He that gives to the needy blesses others, and is blessed himself in a still greater degree. God could have reached his object in saving sinners without the aid of man; but he knew that he could not be happy without acting a part in the great work in which he should be cultivating self-denial and benevolence.

That man might not lose the blessed results of benevolence, our Redeemer formed the plan of enlisting him as his co-worker. By a chain of circumstances which would call forth his charities, he brings man under the best means of cultivating benevolence, and keeps him habitually giving to help the poor, and to advance his cause. He sends his poor as the representatives of himself. A ruined world is drawing forth from us by their necessities talents of means and of influence to present to them the truth, of which they are in perishing need. And as we heed these calls, by labor and acts of benevolence, we are assimilated into the image of him who for our sakes became poor. In bestowing, we bless others, and thus accumulate the true riches.

There has been a great lack of Christian benevolence in the church. Those who were the best able to do in the cause of God for its advancement have done but little.

God has mercifully brought a class to the knowledge of the truth, that they might appreciate its priceless value in comparison with earthly treasures. Jesus has said to these, "Follow me." He is testing them with the invitation to the supper which he has prepared. He is watching to see what characters they will develop, whether their own selfish interests will be considered of greater value than eternal riches. Many of these dear brethren are now by their actions framing the excuses mentioned in the parable.

"Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many, and sent his servant at suppertime to say to them that were bidden, Come, for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came, and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind."

This parable correctly represents the condition of many professing to believe the present truth. The Lord has sent them an invitation to come to the supper which he has prepared for them at great cost to himself, but worldly interests look to them of greater importance than the heavenly treasure. They are invited to take part in the things of eternal value; but their farms, their cattle, and their home interest, seem of so much greater importance than obedience to the heavenly invitation that they overpower every divine attraction, and these earthly things are made the excuse for their disobedience to the heavenly command, "Come; for all things are now ready." These brethren are blindly following the example of those represented in the parable. They look at their worldly possessions, and say, No, Lord, I cannot follow thee, "I pray thee have me excused."

The very blessings which God has given to these men, to prove them, to see if they will render "unto God the things that are God's," they use as an excuse that they cannot obey the claims of truth. They have grasped their earthly treasure in their arms, and say, I must take care of these things; I must not neglect the things of this life; these things are mine. Thus the hearts of these men have become as unimpressible as the beaten highway. They close the door of their hearts to the heavenly messenger, who says, "Come; for all things are now ready," and throw it open, inviting the passage of the world's burden and business cares, and Jesus knocks in vain for admittance.

Their hearts are so overgrown with thorns and cares of this life that heavenly things can find no place. Jesus invites the weary and heavy laden, with promises of rest if they will come to him. He invites them to exchange the galling yoke of selfishness and covetousness, which makes them slaves to mammon, for his yoke, which he declares is easy, and his burden, which is light.

He says, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." He would have them lay aside the heavy burdens of worldly cares and perplexities, and take his yoke, which is self-denial and sacrifice for others. This burden will prove to be light. Those who refuse to accept the relief Christ offers them, and will continue to wear the galling yoke of selfishness, tasking their souls to the utmost in plans to accumulate money for selfish gratification, have not experienced the peace and rest found in bearing the yoke of Christ, and lifting the burdens of self-denial and disinterested benevolence which Christ has borne in their behalf.

When the love of the world takes possession of the heart, and becomes a ruling passion, there is left no room for adoration to God; for the higher powers of the mind submit to the slavery of mammon, and cannot retain thoughts of God and of Heaven. The mind loses its remembrance of God, and is narrowed and dwarfed to the accumulation of money.

Through selfishness and love of the world these men have been passing on with less and less sense of the magnitude of the work for these last days. They have not educated their minds to make a business of serving God. They have not an experience in that direction. Their property has absorbed their affections and eclipsed the magnitude of the plan of salvation. While they are improving and enlarging their worldly plans they see no necessity for the enlargement and extension of the work of God. They invest their means in temporal things, but not in the eternal. Their hearts are ambitious for more means. God has made them the depositaries of his law, that they might let the light so graciously given them shine forth to others. But they have so increased their cares and anxieties that they have no time to bless others with their influence, to converse with their neighbors, to pray with them, and for them, and to seek to bring them to the knowledge of the truth.

These men are responsible for the good they might do, but from which they excuse themselves because of worldly cares, and burdens, which engross their minds and absorb their affections. Souls for whom Christ died might be saved by their personal effort and godly example. Precious souls are perishing for the light which God has given to men to be reflected upon the pathway of others. But the precious light is hid under a bushel, and it gives no light to those who are in the house. Every man is a steward of God. To each the Master has committed his means which man claims as his own. He says, "Occupy till I come." A time is coming when Christ will require his own with usury. He will say to his stewards, "Give an account of thy stewardship." Those who have hid their Lord's money in a napkin in the earth, instead of putting it out to the exchangers, or those who have squandered their Lord's money by expending it for needless things, instead of putting it out to usury by investing it in his cause, will receive no approval of the Master, but decided condemnation. The unprofitable servant in the parable brought back the one talent to God, and said, "I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed, and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth; lo, there thou hast that is thine." His Lord takes up his words: "Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strewed; thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury."

This unprofitable servant was not ignorant of God's plans, but he set himself firmly to thwart the purpose of God, charging him with unfairness in requiring improvement upon the money intrusted to him. This very complaint and murmuring is made by a large class of wealthy men, professing to believe the truth. They are like the unfaithful servant afraid that the increase of the talents God has lent them will be called for to advance the spread of truth; therefore they tie it up, by investing it in earthly treasures, and burying it in the world, thus making it so fast that they have nothing, or next to nothing, to invest in the cause of God. They have buried it, fearing that God would call for some of the principal or increase. When at the demand of their Lord they bring the amount given them, they come with ungrateful excuses why they have not put the means, lent them by God, out to the exchangers, by investing it in his cause, to carry on his work.

He who embezzles his Lord's goods not only loses the talent lent him of God, but loses eternal life. Of him it is said, "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness." The faithful servant who invests his money in the cause of God to save souls, employs his means to the glory of God, and will receive the commendation of the Master, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

What will be this joy of our Lord? It will be in seeing souls saved in the kingdom of glory. "Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

The idea of stewardship should have a practical bearing upon all the people of God. This parable of the talents rightly understood will bar out covetousness, which God calls idolatry. Practical benevolence will give spiritual life to thousands of nominal professors of the truth who now mourn over their darkness. It will transform them from selfish, covetous worshipers of mammon, to earnest, faithful co-workers with Christ in the salvation of sinners.

The foundation of the plan of salvation was laid in a sacrifice. Jesus left the royal courts, and became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. Every one who will share this salvation,

purchased for them by such an infinite sacrifice by the Son of God, will follow the example of the true pattern. Jesus Christ was the chief corner stone, and we must build upon this foundation. Each must have a spirit of self-denial and self-sacrifice. The life of Christ upon earth was unselfish, marked with humiliation and sacrifice. And shall men, partakers of the great salvation which Jesus came from Heaven to bring them, refuse to follow their Lord, and to share in his self-denial and sacrifice? Says Christ, "I am the vine, ye are the branches. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away. And every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit;" The very vital principle, the sap which flows through the vine, nourishes the branches, that they may flourish and bear fruit. Is the servant greater than his Lord? Shall the world's Redeemer practice self-denial and sacrifice on our account, and the members of Christ's body practice self-indulgence? Self-denial is an essential condition of discipleship.

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." I lead the way in the path of self-denial. I require nothing of you my followers but that of which I your Lord give you an example in my own life.

The Saviour of the world conquered Satan in the wilderness of temptation. He overcame to show man how he may overcome. He announced in the synagogue of Nazareth, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

The great work which Jesus announced that he came to do was intrusted to his followers upon the earth. Christ as our head led out in the great work of salvation, and bids us follow his example. He has given us a worldwide message. This truth must be extended to all nations, tongues, and people. Satan's power was to be contested, and he was to be overcome by Christ and also by his followers.

An extensive war was to be maintained against the powers of darkness. And in order to do this work successfully, means were required. God does not propose to send means direct from Heaven, but he gives into the hands of his followers talents of means to use for the very purpose of sustaining this warfare.

He has given his people a plan for raising sums sufficient to make the enterprise self-sustaining. God's plan in the tithing system is beautiful in its simplicity and equality. All may take hold of it in faith and courage, for it is divine in its origin. Here are simplicity and utility combined, which it requires not depth of learning to understand and execute. All may feel that they can act a part in carrying forward the precious work of salvation. Every man, and woman, and youth, may become a treasurer for the Lord. They may be agents to meet the demands upon the treasury. Says the apostle, "Let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him."

Great objects are accomplished by this system; for if one and all accept it, each is made a vigilant and faithful treasurer for God; and there would be no want of means to carry forward the great work of sounding the last message of warning to the world. The treasury will be full if all adopt this system, and the contributors will not be left the poorer. Through every investment made, they will become more wedded to the cause of present truth. They will be "laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

As the persevering, systematic workers see that the tendency of their benevolent efforts is to nourish love to God and their fellow men, and that their personal efforts are extending their sphere of usefulness, they will realize that it is a great blessing to be co-workers with Jesus Christ. The Christian church as a general thing are disowning the claims of God upon them to give alms of the things which they possess to support the warfare against the moral darkness which is flooding the world. Never can the work of God advance as it should until the followers of Christ become active, zealous workers.

Every individual of the church should feel that the truth which they profess is a reality, and they should be disinterested workers. Some rich men feel like murmuring because the work of God is extending, and there is a demand for money. They say there is no end of the calls for means. One object after another is continually rising demanding help. We would say to such that we hope the cause of God will so extend that there will be greater occasions, and more frequent and urgent calls for supplies from the treasury to prosecute the work.

If the plan of systematic benevolence was fully adopted, and carried out to a man, there would be a constant supply in the treasury. The income would flow in like a steady stream constantly supplied by overflowing springs of benevolence.

Almsgiving is a part of gospel religion. Does not the consideration of the infinite price paid for our redemption leave upon us solemn obligations pecuniarily, as well as lay claim upon all our power to be devoted to the work of the Master?

We shall have a debt to settle with the Master by-and-by, when he shall say, Give an account of thy stewardship. If men prefer to set aside the claims of God, and grasp and selfishly retain all that he gives them, he will hold his peace at present, and continue frequently to test them by increasing his bounties, and by letting his blessings flow on, and these men pass on receiving honor of men, and without censure in the church, but by-and-by he will say, "Give an account of thy stewardship." Says Christ, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." "Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price," and are under obligation to glorify God with your means as well as in your body, and in your spirit, which are his.

"Ye are bought with a price," not "with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." He asks the return of the gifts, he has intrusted to us, to aid in the salvation of souls. He has given his blood; he asks our silver.

It is through his poverty that we are made rich, and yet, will we refuse to give back to him his own gifts?

God is not dependent upon man for the support of his cause. He could have sent means direct from Heaven to supply his treasury, if his providence had seen that this was the best for man. He might have devised means whereby angels would have been sent to publish the truth to the world without the agency of men. He might have written the truth upon the heavens, and let that declare to the world his requirements in living characters. God is not dependent upon any man's gold or silver. He says, "Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof." Whatever necessity there is for our agency in the advancement of the cause of God, he has purposely arranged for our good. He has honored us by

making us co-workers with him. He has ordained that there should be a necessity for the cooperation of men, that they may keep in exercise their benevolent affections.

God has in his wise providence placed the poor always with us, that while we shall witness the various forms of suffering and of necessity in the world, we should be tested and proved, and brought into positions to develop Christian character. The poor God has placed among us to call out from us Christian sympathy and love.

Sinners, who are perishing for lack of knowledge, must be left in ignorance and darkness, unless men shall carry to them the light of truth. God will not send angels from Heaven to do the work which he has left for man. He has given all a work to do, for the very reason that he might prove them and that they might reveal their true character. Christ places the poor in our midst as his representatives. "I was an hungered," he says, "and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink." Christ identifies himself with suffering humanity in the persons of the suffering children of men. He makes their necessities his own, and takes to his bosom the woes of the children of men.

The moral darkness of a ruined world pleads to Christian men and women to put forth individual effort, to give of their means, and of their influence, that they may be assimilated into the image of Him who, though he possessed infinite riches, yet for our sakes became poor. The Spirit of God cannot abide with those to whom he has sent the message of his truth, who need to be urged before they can have any sense of their duty to be co-workers with Christ. The apostle enforces the duty of giving from higher grounds than merely human sympathy, because the feelings are moved. He enforces the principle that we should labor unselfishly with an eye single to the glory of God.

Christians are required by the Scriptures to enter upon a plan active benevolence which will keep in constant exercise an interest in the salvation of their fellow men. The moral law enjoined the observance of the Sabbath which was not a burden, except when that law was transgressed, and they were bound by the penalties involved in breaking it. The tithing system was no burden to those who did not depart from the plan. The system enjoined upon the Hebrews has not been repealed or relaxed by the One who originated this plan. Far from its being of no force now, it was to be more fully carried out, and more extended, as salvation through Christ alone should be more fully brought to light in the Christian age.

Jesus made known to the lawyer that the condition of his having eternal life was to carry out in his life the special requirement of the law, which consisted in his loving God with all his heart, and all his soul, and all his mind and strength, and his neighbor as himself. When the typical sacrifices ceased at the death of Christ, the original law, engraved in tables of stone, stood immutable, holding its claims upon man in all ages. And in the Christian age the duty of man was not limited, but more especially defined and simply expressed.

The gospel, extending and widening, required greater provisions to sustain the warfare since the death of Christ, and this made the law of almsgiving a more urgent necessity than under the Hebrew government. Now God requires, not less gifts, but greater than at any other period of the world. The principle laid down by Christ is that the gifts and offerings should be in proportion to the light and blessings enjoyed. He has said, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required."

The blessings of the Christian age were responded to by the first disciples in works of charity and benevolence. The outpouring of the Spirit of God, after Christ left his disciples and ascended to Heaven, led to self-denial, and self-sacrifice for the salvation of others. When the poor saints at Jerusalem were in distress, Paul writes to the Gentile Christians in regard to works of benevolence, and says, "Therefore, as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also." Here benevolence is placed by the side of faith, love, and Christian diligence. Those who think that they can be good Christians, and close their ears and hearts to the calls of God for their liberalities, are in a fearful deception. There are those who abound in a profession of great love for the truth, and as far as words are concerned, have an interest to see the truth advance, but do nothing for its advancement. The faith of such is dead, not being made perfect by works. The Lord never made such a mistake as to convert a soul, and leave it under the power of covetousness.

The tithing system reaches back beyond the days of Moses. Men were required to offer to God gifts for religious purposes before the definite system was given to Moses, even as far back as the days of Adam. In complying with God's requirements they were to manifest in offerings their appreciation of his mercies and blessings to them. This was continued through successive generations, and was carried out by Abraham who gave tithes to Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God. The same principle existed in the days of Job. Jacob, when at Bethel an exile and penniless wanderer, lay down at night solitary and alone with a rock for his pillow, and there promised the Lord, "Of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." God does not compel men to give. All that they give must be voluntary. He will not have his treasury replenished with unwilling offerings.

God designed to bring man into close relationship with himself, and in sympathy and love with his fellow men, by placing upon him responsibilities in deeds that would counteract selfishness, and strengthen his love for God and man. The plan of system in benevolence, God designed for the good of man, who was inclined to be selfish, and to close his heart to generous deeds and actions. The Lord required gifts to be made at stated times, being so arranged that giving would become habit, and benevolence felt to be a Christian duty. The heart opened by one gift was not to have time to become selfishly cold, and to close, before it bestowed the next. The stream was to be continually flowing, thus keeping open the channel by acts of benevolence.

As to the amount required God had specified one-tenth of the increase. This is left to the conscience and benevolence of men, whose judgment in this tithing system should have free play. And while it is left free to the conscience, a plan has been laid out definite enough for all. No compulsion is required.

God called for men in the Mosaic dispensation to give the tenth of all their increase. He committed to their trust the things of this life, talents to be improved and returned to him again. He has required a tenth, and this he claims as the very least that man should return to him. He says, I give you nine-tenths, while I require one-tenth; that is mine. When men withhold the one-tenth they rob God. Sin offerings, peace offerings, and thank offerings, were also required in addition to the tenth of the increase.

All that is withheld of the tenth which God claims of the increase is recorded in the books of Heaven as robbery against God. Such defraud their Creator, and when this sin of neglect shall be brought before them, it is not enough to change their course and begin to work from that time upon the right principle. This will not correct the figures in the heavenly record for embezzling the property committed to them

in trust to be returned to the lender. Repentance for unfaithful dealing with God, and for base ingratitude, is required.

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

A promise is here given, if all the tithes shall be brought into the storehouse a blessing from God will be poured upon the obedient.

"And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed; for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts." If all who profess the truth will come up to the claims of God, in giving the tenth which God says is his, the treasury will be abundantly supplied with means to carry forward the great work of the salvation of man.

God gives man nine-tenths, while he has claimed one-tenth for sacred purposes, as he has given man six days for his own work, and has reserved and set apart the seventh day to himself. For, like the Sabbath, a tenth of the increase is sacred. God has reserved it for himself. He will carry forward his work upon the earth with the increase of means he has intrusted to man.

God required of his ancient people three yearly gatherings. "Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the Lord empty. Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee." No less than one-third of their income was devoted for sacred and religious purposes.

Whenever God's people, in any period of the world, have cheerfully and willingly carried out his plan in systematic benevolence, and in gifts and offerings, there has been a standing promise that prosperity should attend all their labors just in proportion as they obeyed his requirements. When they acknowledged the claims of God, and complied with his requirements, honoring him with their substance, their barns were filled with plenty. But when they robbed God in tithes and in offerings, they were made to realize that they were not only robbing him, but themselves; for God limited his blessings to them, just in proportion as they limited their offerings to him.

Some will pronounce this as one of the rigorous laws binding upon the Hebrews. But this was not a burden to the willing heart that loved God. It was only when their selfish natures strengthened by withholding, that men have lost sight of eternal considerations, and valued their earthly treasures above that of souls. There are even more urgent necessities upon the Israel of God in these last days than were upon ancient Israel. There is a great and important work to be accomplished in a very short time, and God never designed that the law of the tithing system should be of no account among his people, but that instead of this, the spirit of sacrifice should widen and deepen for the closing work. By Ellen G. White. (To be Continued.)

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"The Temptation of Christ (Continued)"--4

The humiliation and agonizing sufferings of Christ in the wilderness of temptation were for the race. In Adam all was lost through transgression. Through Christ was man's only hope of restoration to the favor of God. Man had separated himself at such a distance from God by transgression of his law, that he could not humiliate himself before God proportionate to his grievous sin. The Son of God could fully understand the aggravating sins of the transgressor, and in his sinless character he alone could make an acceptable atonement for man in suffering the agonizing sense of his Father's displeasure. The sorrow and anguish of the Son of God for the sins of the world were proportionate to his divine excellence and purity, as well as to the magnitude of the offense.

Christ was our example in all things. As we see his humiliation in the long trial and fast in the wilderness to overcome the temptations of appetite in our behalf, we are to take this lesson home to ourselves when we are tempted. If the power of appetite is so strong upon the human family, and its indulgence so fearful that the Son of God subjected himself to such a test, how important that we feel the necessity of having appetite under the control of reason. Our Saviour fasted nearly six weeks, that he might gain for man the victory upon the point of appetite. How can professed Christians with an enlightened conscience, and Christ before them as their pattern, yield to the indulgence of those appetites which have an enervating influence upon the mind and heart? It is a painful fact that habits of self-gratification at the expense of health, and the weakening of moral power, is holding in the bonds of slavery at the present time a large share of the Christian world.

Many who profess godliness do not inquire into the reason of Christ's long period of fasting and suffering in the wilderness. His anguish was not so much from enduring the pangs of hunger as from his sense of the fearful result of the indulgence of appetite and passion upon the race. He knew that appetite would be man's idol, and would lead him to forget God, and would stand directly in the way of his salvation.

Our Saviour showed perfect confidence in his Heavenly Father, that he would not suffer him to be tempted above what he should give him strength to endure, and would bring him off conqueror if he patiently bore the test to which he was subjected. Christ had not, of his own will, placed himself in danger. God had suffered Satan, for the time being, to have this power over his Son. Jesus knew that if he preserved his integrity in this extremely trying position, an angel of God would be sent to relieve him if there was no other way. He had taken humanity, and was the representative of the race.

Satan saw that he prevailed nothing with Christ in his second great temptation. "And the devil, taking him up into a high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, all this power will I give thee, and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me: and to whomsoever I will, I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine."

In the first two great temptations Satan had not revealed his true purposes or his character. He claimed to be an exalted messenger from the courts of Heaven, but he now throws off his disguise. In a panoramic view he presented before Christ all the kingdoms of the world in the most attractive light, while he claimed to be the prince of the world.

This last temptation was the most alluring of the three. Satan knew that Christ's life must be one of sorrow, hardship, and conflict. And he thought he could take advantage of this fact to bribe Christ to yield his integrity. Satan brought all his strength to bear upon this last temptation, for this last effort was to decide his destiny as to who should be victor. He claimed the world as his dominion, and he was the prince of the power of the air. He bore Jesus to the top of an exceeding high mountain, and then in a panoramic view presented before him all the kingdoms of the world that had been so long under his dominion, and offered them to him in one great gift. He told Christ he could come into possession of the kingdoms of the world without suffering or peril on his part. Satan promises to yield his scepter and dominion, and Christ shall be rightful ruler for one favor from him. All he requires in return for making over to him the kingdoms of the world that day presented before him, is, that Christ shall do him homage as to a superior.

The eye of Jesus for a moment rested upon the glory presented before him; but he turned away and refused to look upon the entrancing spectacle. He would not endanger his steadfast integrity by dallying with the tempter. When Satan solicited homage, Christ's divine indignation was aroused, and he could no longer tolerate the blasphemous assumption of Satan, or even permit him to remain in his presence. Here Christ exercised his divine authority, and commanded Satan to desist. "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Satan, in his pride and arrogance, had declared himself to be the rightful and permanent ruler of the world, the possessor of all its riches and glory, claiming homage of all who lived in it, as though he had created the world and all things that were therein. Said he to Christ: "All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will give it." He endeavored to make a special contract with Christ, to make over to him at once the whole of his claim, if he would worship him.

This insult to the Creator moved the indignation of the Son of God to rebuke and dismiss him. Satan had flattered himself in his first temptation that he had so well concealed his true character and purposes that Christ did not recognize him as the fallen rebel chief whom he had conquered and expelled from Heaven. The words of dismissal from Christ, "Get thee hence, Satan," evidenced that he was known from the first, and that all his deceptive arts has been unsuccessful upon the Son of God. Satan knew that if Jesus should die to redeem man, his power must end after a season, and he would be destroyed. Therefore, it was his studied plan to prevent, if possible, the completion of the great work which had been commenced by the Son of God. If the plan of man's redemption should fail, he would retain the kingdom which he then claimed. And if he should succeed, he flattered himself that he would reign in opposition to the God of Heaven.

When Jesus left Heaven, and there left his power and glory, Satan exulted. He thought that the Son of God was placed in his power. The temptation took so easily with the holy pair in Eden, that he hoped he could with his satanic cunning and power overthrow even the Son of God, and thereby save his life and kingdom. If he could tempt Jesus to depart from the will of his Father, as he had done in his temptation with Adam and Eve, then his object would be gained.

The time was to come when Jesus should redeem the possession of Satan by giving his own life, and, after a season, all in Heaven and earth should submit to him. Jesus was steadfast. He chose his life of suffering, his ignominious death, and, in the way appointed by his Father, to become a lawful ruler of the kingdoms of the earth, and have them given into his hands as an everlasting possession. Satan also will be given into his hands to be destroyed by death, never more to annoy Jesus, nor the saints in glory.

Jesus said to this wily foe, "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, thou, shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Satan had asked Christ to give him evidence that he was the Son of God, and he had in this instance the proof he had asked. At the divine command of Christ he was compelled to obey. He was repulsed and silenced. He had no power to enable him to withstand the peremptory dismissal. He was compelled without another word to instantly desist and to leave the world's Redeemer.

The hateful presence of Satan was withdrawn. The contest was ended. With immense suffering Christ's victory in the wilderness was complete as was the failure of Adam. And for a season he stood freed from the presence of his powerful adversary, and from his legions of angels.

After Satan had ended his temptations he departed from Jesus for a little season. The foe was conquered, but the conflict had been long and exceedingly trying. And after it was ended Christ was exhausted and fainting. He fell upon the ground as though dying. Heavenly angels who had bowed before him in the royal courts, and who had been with intense, yet painful, interest watching their loved Commander, and with amazement had witnessed the terrible contest he had endured with Satan, now came and ministered unto him. They prepared him food and strengthened him, for he lay as one dead. Angels were filled with amazement and awe, as they knew the world's Redeemer was passing through inexpressible suffering to achieve the redemption of man. He who was equal with God in the royal courts, was before them emaciated from nearly six weeks of fasting. Solitary and alone he had been pursued by the rebel chief, who had been expelled from Heaven. He had endured a more close and severe test than would ever be brought to bear upon man. The warfare with the power of darkness had been long and intensely trying to Christ's human nature in his weak and suffering condition. The angels brought messages of love and comfort from the Father to his Son, and also the assurance that all Heaven triumphed in the full and entire victory he had gained in behalf of man.

The cost of the redemption of the race can never be fully realized until the redeemed shall stand with the Redeemer, by the throne of God. And as they have capacity to appreciate the value of immortal life, and the eternal reward, they will swell the song of victory and immortal triumph, "Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." "And every creature," says John, "which is in Heaven and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

Although Satan had failed in his strongest efforts, and most powerful temptations, yet he had not given up all hope that he might, at some future time, be more successful in his efforts. He looked forward to the period of Christ's ministry, when he should have opportunities to try his power and artifices against him. Satan laid his plans to blind the understanding of the Jews, God's chosen people, that they would not discern in Christ the world's Redeemer. He thought he could fill their hearts with

envy, jealousy, and hatred against the Son of God, so that they would not receive him, but make his life upon earth as bitter as possible.

Satan held a council with his angels as to the course they should pursue to prevent the people from having faith in Christ as the Messiah whom the Jews had so long been anxiously expecting. He was disappointed and enraged that he had prevailed nothing against Jesus in the manifold temptations in the wilderness. He thought if he could inspire unbelief in the hearts of Christ's own people as to his being the promised One, he might discourage Jesus in his mission, and secure the Jews as his agents to carry out his purposes. By Mrs. E. G. White. (To be Continued.)

Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, September 8, 1874

(Vol. 44, #12)

"The Temptation of Christ (Continued)"--5

Satan comes to man with his temptations as an angel of light, as he came to Christ. He has been working to bring man into a condition of physical and moral weakness, that he may overcome him with his temptations, and then triumph over his ruin. And he has been successful in tempting man to indulge appetite, regardless of the result. He well knows that it is impossible for man to discharge his obligations to God, and to his fellow men, while he impairs the faculties God has given him. The brain is the capital of the body. If the perceptive faculties become benumbed through intemperance of any kind, eternal things are not discerned.

God gives no permission to man to violate the laws of his being. But man, through yielding to Satan's temptations to indulge intemperance, brings the higher faculties in subjection to the animal appetites and passions. When these gain the ascendancy, man, who was created a little lower than the angels, with faculties susceptible of the highest cultivation, surrenders to be controlled by Satan. And he gains easy access to those who are in bondage to appetite. Through intemperance, some sacrifice one-half, and others two-thirds, of their physical, mental, and moral powers, and become playthings for the enemy. Those who would have clear minds to discern Satan's devices, must have their physical appetites under the control of reason and conscience. The moral and vigorous action of the higher powers of the mind are essential to the perfection of Christian character. And the strength or weakness of the mind has very much to do with our usefulness in this world, and with our final salvation. The ignorance that has prevailed in regard to God's law in our physical nature is deplorable. Intemperance of any kind is a violation of the laws of our being. Imbecility is prevailing to a fearful extent. Sin is made attractive by the covering of light which Satan throws over it, and he is well pleased when he can hold the Christian world in their daily habits under the tyranny of custom, like the heathen, and allow appetite to govern them.

If men and women of intelligence have their moral powers benumbed through intemperance of any kind, they are, in many of their habits, elevated but little above the heathen. Satan is constantly drawing

the people from saving light, to custom and fashion, irrespective of physical, mental, and moral health. The great enemy knows that if appetite and passion predominate, health of body and strength of intellect are sacrificed upon the altar of self-gratification, and man is brought to speedy ruin. If enlightened intellect holds the reins, controlling the animal propensities, keeping them in subjection to the moral powers, Satan well knows that his power to overcome with his temptations is very small.

In our day people talk of the dark ages, and boast of progress. But with this progress wickedness and crime do not decrease. We deplore the absence of natural simplicity, and the increase of artificial display. Health, strength, beauty, and long life, which were common in the so-called "dark ages," are rare now. Nearly everything desirable is sacrificed to meet the demands of fashionable life.

A large share of the Christian world have no right to call themselves Christians. Their habits, their extravagance, and general treatment of their own bodies, are in violation of physical law, and contrary to the Bible standard. They are working out for themselves, in their course of life, physical suffering, mental and mortal feebleness.

Through his devices, Satan has, in many respects, made domestic life one of care and complicated burdens, in order to meet the demands of fashion. His purpose in doing this is to keep minds occupied so fully with the things of this life that they can give but little attention to their highest interest. Intemperance in eating and in dressing has so engrossed the minds of the Christian world that they do not take time to become intelligent in regard to the laws of their being, that they may obey them. To profess the name of Christ is of but little account, if the life does not correspond with the will of God, revealed in his word.

In the wilderness of temptation Christ overcame on man's behalf on the point of appetite. His example of self-denial, and self-control, when suffering the gnawing pangs of hunger, is a rebuke to the Christian world for their dissipation and gluttony. There is at this time nine times as much money expended for the gratification of appetite, and to indulge foolish and hurtful lusts, as there is given to advance the gospel of Christ. Were Peter upon the earth now, he would exhort the professed followers of Christ to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. And Paul would call upon the churches in general to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. And Christ would drive from the temple those who are defiled by the use of tobacco, polluting the sanctuary of God by their tobacconized breaths. He would say to these worshipers, as he did to the Jews, "My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." We would say to such, your unholy offerings of ejected quids of tobacco defile the temple, and are abhorred of God. Your worship is not acceptable, for your bodies which should be the temple for the Holy Ghost are defiled. You also rob the treasury of God of thousands of dollars through the indulgence of unnatural appetite.

If we would see the standard of virtue and godliness exalted, as Christians, we have a work devolving upon us individually to control appetite, the indulgence of which counteracts the force of truth, and weakens moral power to resist and overcome temptation. As Christ's followers we should, in eating and drinking, act from principle. When we obey the injunction of the apostle, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," thousands of dollars which are now sacrificed upon the altar of hurtful lust will flow into the Lord's treasury, multiplying publications in different languages to be scattered like the leaves of autumn. Missions will be established in other nations, and then will the followers of Christ be indeed the light of the world.

The adversary of souls is working in these last days with greater power than ever before to accomplish the ruin of man through the indulgence of appetite and passions. And many who are held by Satan under the power of slavish appetite are the professed followers of Christ. They profess to worship God, while appetite is their god. Their unnatural desires for these indulgences are not controlled by reason or judgment. Those who are slaves to tobacco will see their families suffering for the conveniences of life, and for necessary food, yet they have not the power of will to forego their tobacco. The clamors of appetite prevail over natural affection. Appetite, which they have in common with the brute, controls them. The cause of Christianity, and even humanity, would not in any case be met, if dependent upon those in the habitual use of tobacco and liquor. If they had means to use only in one direction, the treasury of God would not be replenished, but they would have their tobacco and liquor. The tobacco idolater will not deny his appetite for the cause of God.

It is impossible for these to realize the binding claims and holiness of the law of God. The brain and nerves are deadened by the use of this narcotic. They cannot value the atonement or appreciate the worth of immortal life. The indulgence of fleshly lusts wars against the soul. The apostle in the most impressive manner addresses Christians, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God." If the body is saturated with liquor and the defilement of tobacco, it is not holy and acceptable to God. Satan knows that it cannot be, and for this reason he brings his temptations to bear upon men upon the point of appetite, that he may bring them into bondage to this propensity and thus work their ruin.

The Jewish sacrifices were all examined with careful scrutiny to see if any blemish was upon them, or if they were tainted with disease. The least defect or impurity was sufficient reason for the priests to reject them. The offering must be sound and valuable. The apostle has in view the requirements of God upon the Jews in their offerings when he in the most earnest manner appeals to his brethren to present their bodies a living sacrifice. Not a diseased, decaying offering, but a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God.

How many come to the house of God in feebleness, and how many come defiled by the indulgence of their own appetite! Those who have degraded themselves by wrong habits, when they assemble for the worship of God, give forth such emanations from their diseased bodies as to be disgusting to those around them. And how offensive must this be to a pure and holy God.

A large proportion of all the infirmities that afflict the human family are the results of their own wrong habits, because of their willing ignorance, or of their disregard of the light which God has given in relation to the laws of their being. It is not possible for us to glorify God while living in violation of the law of life. The heart cannot possibly maintain consecration to God while the lustful appetite is indulged. A diseased body and disordered intellect, because of continual indulgence in hurtful lust, make sanctification of the body and spirit impossible. The apostle understood the importance of the healthful conditions of the body for the successful perfection of Christian character. He says, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." He mentions the fruit of the Spirit, among which is temperance. "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."

Men and women indulge appetite at the expense of health and the enfeebling of the intellect, so that they cannot appreciate the plan of salvation. What appreciation can such have of the temptation of Christ in the wilderness, and the victory he gained upon the point of appetite. It is impossible for them

to have exalted views of God, and to realize the claims of his law. The proposed followers of Christ are forgetful of the great sacrifice made by him on their account. The Majesty of Heaven, in order to bring salvation within their reach was smitten, bruised, and afflicted. He became a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. In the wilderness of temptation he resisted Satan, although the tempter was clothed with the livery of Heaven. Christ, although brought to great physical suffering, refused to yield on a single point, notwithstanding the most flattering inducements were presented to bribe and influence him to yield his integrity. All this honor, all this riches and glory, said the deceiver, will I give thee if thou wilt only acknowledge my claims.

Christ was firm. Oh! where would now be the salvation of the race if Christ had been as weak in moral power as man? No wonder that joy filled Heaven as the fallen chief left the wilderness of temptation a conquered foe. Christ has power from his Father to give his divine grace and strength to man--making it possible for him through his name, to overcome. There are but few professed followers of Christ who choose to engage with him in the work of resisting Satan's temptation as he resisted and overcame.

Professed Christians, who enjoy gatherings of gaiety, pleasure and feasting, cannot appreciate the conflict of Christ in the wilderness. This great example of their Lord in overcoming Satan is lost of them. This infinite victory which Christ achieved for them in the plan of salvation is meaningless. They see no special interest in the wonderful humiliation of our Saviour and the anguish and sufferings he endured for sinful man, while Satan was pressing him with his manifold temptations. The scene of trial with Christ in the wilderness was the foundation of the plan of salvation, and gives to fallen man the key whereby he, in Christ's name, may overcome.

Many professed Christians look upon this portion of the life of Christ as they would upon a common warfare between two kings, and as having no special bearing upon their own life and character. Therefore the manner of warfare, and the wonderful victory gained, have but little interest for them. Their perceptive powers are blunted by Satan's artifices, so that they cannot discern that he who afflicted Christ with manifold temptations in the wilderness, determining to rob him of his integrity as the Son of the Infinite, is to be their adversary to the end of time. Although he failed to overcome Christ, his power is not weakened over man. All are personally exposed to the temptations that Christ overcame, but strength is provided for them in the all-powerful name of the great Conqueror. And all must, for themselves, individually overcome. Many are assailed and fall under the very same temptations wherewith Satan assailed Christ. By Mrs. E. G. White. (To be Continued.)

Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, October 13, 1874

(Vol. 44, #16)

"The Temptation of Christ (Continued)"--6

Professed Christians engage in feastings and in scenes of amusement which degrade the religion of Jesus Christ. It is impossible for those who find pleasure in church socials, festivals and numerous gatherings for pleasure, to have ardent love and sacred reverence for Jesus. His words of warning and

instruction have not weight upon their minds. Should Christ come among the assembly who were absorbed in their plays and frivolous amusements, would the solemn melody of his voice be heard in benediction, saying, "Peace be to this house"? How would the Saviour of the world enjoy these scenes of gaiety and folly?

Christians and the world unite, one in heart, one in spirit, in these festal occasions. The Man of sorrows, who was acquainted with grief, would find no welcome in these places of amusement. The lovers of pleasure and luxury--the thoughtless and the gay--are collected in these rooms, and the glitter and tinsel of fashion are seen everywhere. The ornament of crosses of gold and pearl, which represent a Redeemer crucified, adorn their persons. But the One whom these highly prized jewels represent finds no welcome--no room. His presence would be a restraint upon their mirth, their gaiety, and their sensual amusements, and would remind them of neglected duty, and bring to their remembrance hidden sins which caused that sorrowful countenance, and made those eyes so sad and tearful.

The presence of Christ would be positively painful in these gatherings for pleasure. Surely, none could invite him there, for his countenance is marred with sorrows more than the sons of men, because of these very amusements which put God out of mind, and make the broad road attractive to the sinner. The enchantment of these exciting scenes perverts reason, and destroys reverence for sacred things. Ministers, who profess to be Christ's representatives, frequently take the lead in these frivolous amusements. "Ye are," says Christ, "the light of the world." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."

In what manner is the light of truth shining from that thoughtless, pleasure seeking company? Professed followers of Jesus Christ who indulge in gaiety and feasting cannot be partakers with Christ of his sufferings. They have no sense of his sufferings. They do not care to meditate upon self-denial and sacrifice. They find but little interest in studying the marked points in the history of the life of Christ upon which the plan of salvation rests, but imitate ancient Israel who ate and drank and rose up to play. In order to copy a pattern correctly, we must carefully study its design. If we are indeed to overcome as Christ overcame, that we may mingle with the bloodwashed, glorified company before the throne of God, it is of the highest importance that we become acquainted with the life of our Redeemer and deny self as did Christ. We must meet temptations and overcome obstacles, and through toil and suffering in the name of Jesus overcome as he overcame.

The great trial of Christ in the wilderness on the point of appetite was to leave man an example of self-denial. This long fast was to convict men of the sinfulness of the things in which professed Christians indulge. The victory which Christ gained in the wilderness was to show man the sinfulness of the very things in which he takes such pleasure. The salvation of man was in the balance, and to be decided by the trial of Christ in the wilderness. If Christ was a victor on the point of appetite, then there was a chance for man to overcome. If Satan gained the victory through his subtlety, man was bound by the power of appetite in chains of indulgence which he could not have moral power to break. Christ's humanity alone could never have endured this test, but his divine power combined with humanity gained in behalf of man an infinite victory. Our Representative in this victory, raised humanity in the scale of moral value with God.

Christians, who understand the mystery of godliness, who have a high and sacred sense of the atonement, who realize in the sufferings of Christ in the wilderness a victory gained for them, would see such marked contrast between these things and the church gatherings for pleasure and the indulgence

of appetite as would turn them in disgust from these scenes of revelry. Christians would be greatly strengthened by earnestly and frequently comparing their lives with the true standard, the life of Christ. The numerous socials, festivals, and picnics to tempt the appetite to overindulgence, and the amusements which lead to levity and forgetfulness of God, can find no sanction in the example of Christ, the world's Redeemer, the only safe pattern for man to copy if he would overcome as Christ overcame.

Although Christ gained a priceless victory in behalf of man in overcoming the temptations of Satan in the wilderness, this victory will not benefit man unless he also gains the victory on his own account.

Man now has the advantage over Adam in his warfare with Satan; for he has Adam's experience in disobedience and his consequent fall to warn him to shun his example. Man also has Christ's example in overcoming appetite, and the manifold temptations of Satan, and in vanquishing the mighty foe upon every point, and coming off victor in every contest. If man stumbles and falls under the temptations of Satan, he is without excuse; for he has the disobedience of Adam as a warning, and the life of the world's Redeemer as an example of obedience and self-denial, and the promise of Christ that "to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

In professedly Christian gatherings, Satan throws a religious garment over delusive pleasures and unholy revelings to give them the appearance of sanctity, and the consciences of many are quieted because means are raised to defray church expenses. Men refuse to give for the love of God; but for the love of pleasure, and the indulgence of appetite for selfish considerations, they will part with their money.

Is it because there is not power in the lessons of Christ upon benevolence, and in his example, and the grace of God upon the heart to lead men to glorify God with their substance, that such a course must be resorted to in order to sustain the church? The injury sustained to the physical, mental, and moral health in these scenes of amusement and gluttony is not small. And the day of final reckoning will show souls lost through the influence of these scenes of gaiety and folly.

It is a deplorable fact that sacred and eternal considerations do not have that power to open the hearts of the professed followers of Christ to make freewill offerings to sustain the gospel, as the tempting bribes of feasting and general merriment. It is a sad reality that these inducements will prevail when sacred and eternal things will have no force to influence the heart to engage in works of benevolence.

The plan of Moses in the wilderness to raise means was highly successful. There was no compulsion necessary. Moses made no grand feast. He did not invite the people to scenes of gaiety, dancing, and general amusement. Neither did he institute lotteries or anything of this profane order to obtain means to erect the tabernacle of God in the wilderness. God commanded Moses to invite the children of Israel to bring the offerings. Moses was to accept gifts of every man that gave willingly from his heart. These freewill offerings came in so great abundance that Moses proclaimed it was enough. They must cease their presents; for they had given abundantly, more than they could use.

Satan's temptations succeed with the professed followers of Christ on the point of indulgence of pleasure and appetite. Clothed as an angel of light, he will quote Scripture to justify the temptations he places before men to indulge the appetite, and in worldly pleasures which suit the carnal heart. The

professed followers of Christ are weak in moral power, and are fascinated with the bribe which Satan has presented before them, and he gains the victory. How does God look upon churches that are sustained by such means? Christ cannot accept these offerings, because they were not given through their love and devotion to him, but through their idolatry of self. But what many would not do for the love of Christ, they will do for the love of delicate luxuries to gratify the appetite, and for love of worldly amusements to please the carnal heart. By Mrs. E. G. White. (To be Continued.)

Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, December 15, 1874

(Vol. 44, #25)

"Tithes and Offerings (Concluded)"

Systematic benevolence should not be made systematic compulsion. It is freewill offerings that are acceptable to God. True Christian benevolence springs from the principle of grateful love. Love of Christ cannot exist without corresponding love to those whom he came into the world to redeem. Love to Christ must be the ruling principle of the being, controlling all its emotions and directing all its energies. Redeeming love should awaken all that tender affection and self-sacrificing devotion that is possible to exist in the heart of man. When this is the case, no heart stirring appeals will be needed to break through their selfishness and awaken their dormant sympathies, to call forth benevolent offerings for the precious cause of truth.

Jesus has purchased us at an infinite sacrifice. All our capabilities and all our influence are indeed our Saviour's, and should be dedicated to his service. By doing this, we show our gratitude that we have been ransomed from the slavery of sin by the precious blood of Christ. Our Saviour is ever working for us. He has ascended up on high and pleads in behalf of the purchase of his blood. He pleads before his Father the agonies of the crucifixion. He raises his wounded hands and intercedes for his church, that they may be kept from falling under temptation.

If our senses could be quickened to take in this wonderful work of our Saviour for our salvation, love, deep and ardent, would burn in our hearts. Our apathy and cold indifference would then alarm us. Entire devotion and benevolence, prompted by grateful love, will impart to the smallest offering and willing sacrifice a divine fragrance, making the gift of priceless value. But, after all that we can bestow is yielded willingly to our Redeemer, be it ever so valuable to us, if we view the debt of gratitude we owe to God as it really is, all we may offer will seem to us very insufficient and meager. But the angels take these offerings, which to us seem poor, and present them as a fragrant offering before the throne, and they are accepted.

We do not, as followers of Christ, realize our true position. We do not have correct views of our responsibilities as hired servants of Christ. He has advanced us the wages in his suffering life and his spilled blood, to bind us in willing servitude to himself. All the good things we have are a loan from our Saviour. He has made us stewards. Our smallest offerings, our humblest services, presented in faith and love, may be consecrated gifts to win souls to the service of the Master, to promote his glory. The

interest and prosperity of Christ's kingdom should be paramount to every other consideration. Those who make their pleasure and selfish interest the chief objects of their lives are not faithful stewards.

Those who deny self to do others good, and devote themselves and all they have to Christ's service, will realize the happiness which the selfish man seeks for in vain. Said our Saviour, "Whosoever forsaketh not all that he hath cannot be my disciple." "Charity seeketh not her own." This is the fruit of that disinterested love and benevolence which characterized the life of Christ. The law of God, in our hearts, will bring our own interests in subordination to high and eternal considerations. We are enjoined by Christ to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. This is our first and highest duty. Our Master expressly warned his servants not to lay up treasures upon the earth, for in doing so their hearts would be upon earthly, rather than heavenly, things. Here is where many poor souls have made shipwreck of faith. They have gone directly contrary to the express injunction of our Lord, and have allowed the love of money to become the ruling passion of their lives. They are intemperate in their efforts to acquire means. They are as much intoxicated with their insane desire for riches as the inebriate for his liquor.

Christians forget that they are servants of the Master, that they themselves, their time, and all that they have, belong to him. Many are tempted, and the majority are overcome, by the delusive inducements which Satan presents to invest their money where it will yield them the greatest profit in dollars and cents. There are but few who consider the binding claims that God has upon them to make it their first business to meet the necessities of his cause, and let their own desires be served last. There are but few who invest in God's cause in proportion to their means. Many have fastened their money in property which they must sell before they can invest it in the cause of God, and thus put it to a practical use. They make this an excuse for doing but little in their Redeemer's cause. They have as effectually buried their money in the earth as the man in the parable. They rob God of the tenth which he claims as his own, and in robbing him they rob themselves of the heavenly treasure.

The plan of systematic benevolence does not press heavily upon any one man. "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." The poor are not excluded from the privilege of giving. They may act a part in this work, as well as the wealthy. The lesson Christ gave in regard to the widow's two mites shows us that the smallest willing offerings of the poor, if given from a heart of love, are as acceptable as the largest donations of the rich.

In the balances of the sanctuary, the gifts of the poor, made from love to Christ, are not estimated according to the amount given, but according to the love which prompts the sacrifice. The promises of Jesus will as surely be realized by the liberal poor man, who has but little to offer, but who gives that little freely, as by the wealthy man who gives of his abundance. The poor man makes a sacrifice of his little which he really feels. He really denies himself of some things that he needs for his own comfort, while the wealthy man gives of his abundance, and feels no want, and denies himself nothing that he really needs. Therefore, there is a sacredness in the poor man's offering that is not found in the rich man's gift; for the rich give of their abundance. God's providence has arranged the entire plan of systematic benevolence for the benefit of man. His providence never stands still. If God's servants follow his opening providence all will be active workers.

Those who withhold from the treasury of God, and hoard their means for their children, endanger the spiritual interest of their children. They place their property, which is a stumblingblock to themselves, in the pathway of their children, that they may stumble over it to perdition. Many are making a great mistake in regard to the things of this life. They economize, withholding from themselves and others the good they might receive from a right use of the means which God has lent them, and become selfish, and avaricious. They neglect their spiritual interests, and become dwarfs in religious growth, all for the sake of accumulating wealth which they cannot use. They leave their property to their children, and nine times out of ten it is even a greater curse to their heirs than it has been to themselves. Children relying upon the property of their parents, often fail to make a success of this life, and generally utterly fail to secure the life to come. The very best legacy parents can leave their children is a knowledge of useful labor and the example of a life characterized by disinterested benevolence, showing by their works that the true value of money is only to be appreciated in the good that it will accomplish in relieving their own wants, the necessities of others, and in advancing the cause of God.

Some are willing to give according to what they have, and feel that God has no further claims upon them, because they have not a great amount of means. They have no income that they can spare from the necessities of their families. But there are many of this class who might ask themselves the question; am I giving according to what I might have had? God designed that their powers of body and mind should be put to use. Some have not improved to the best account the ability that God has given them. Labor is apportioned to man. It was connected with the curse, because made necessary by sin. The physical, mental, and moral well-being of man makes a life of useful labor necessary. "Be not slothful in business," is the injunction of the inspired apostle.

No person, whether rich or poor, can glorify God by a life of indolence. All the capital that many poor men have is time and physical strength and this is so frequently wasted in love of ease, and in careless indolence, that they have nothing to bring to their Lord in tithes and in offerings. If Christian men lack wisdom to labor to the best account, and to make a judicious appropriation of their physical and mental powers, they should have meekness and lowliness of mind to receive advice and counsel of their brethren, that their better judgment may supply their own deficiencies. Many poor men who are now content to do nothing for the good of their fellow men, and for the advancement of the cause of God, might do much if they would. They are as accountable to God for their capital of physical strength as is the rich man for his capital of money.

Some who ought to put means into the treasury of God will be receivers from it. There are those who are now poor who might improve their condition by a judicious use of their time, by avoiding patent rights, and restraining their inclination to engage in speculations in order to obtain means in some easier way than by patient, persevering labor.

If those who have not made life a success were willing to be instructed, they could train themselves to habits of self-denial and strict economy, and have the satisfaction of being distributors, rather than receivers, of charity. There are many slothful servants. If they would do what it is in their power to do, they would experience so great a blessing in helping others that they would indeed realize that it is "more blessed to give than to receive."

Rightly directed benevolence draws upon the mental and moral energies of men, and excites them to most healthful action in blessing the needy and in advancing the cause of God. If those who have means should realize that they are accountable to God for every dollar that they expend, their supposed wants

would be much less. If conscience was alive, she would testify of needless appropriations in the gratification of the appetite, and in ministering to pride, to vanity, and to amusements, and report the squandering of their Lord's money, which should have been devoted to his cause. Those who waste their Lord's goods will have to give an account of it to the Master, by-and-by.

If professed Christians would use less of their wealth in the adorning of the body, and in beautifying their own houses, and would consume less in the extravagant, health destroying luxuries upon their tables, they could place much larger sums into the treasury of God. They would thus imitate their Redeemer, who left Heaven, his riches, and his glory, and for our sakes became poor, that we might have eternal riches. If we are too poor to faithfully render to God in the tithes and offerings as he requires, we are certainly too poor to dress expensively; and to eat luxuriously; for we are wasting our Lord's money in hurtful indulgences to please and glorify ourselves. We should inquire diligently of ourselves, What treasure have we secured in the kingdom of God? Are we rich toward God?

Jesus gave his disciples a lesson upon covetousness. "And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

The length and happiness of life consist not in the amount of our earthly possessions. This foolish rich man in his supreme selfishness had laid up for himself treasures that he could not use. He had lived only for himself. He had overreached in trade, had made sharp bargains, and had not been exercised by mercy or the love of God. He had robbed the fatherless and widow, and defrauded his fellow men to add to his increasing stock of worldly possessions. He might have laid up his treasure in Heaven in bags that wax not old. Through his covetousness he lost both worlds.

Those who humbly use to the glory of God the means that he has intrusted to them, will receive their treasure by-and-by from the Master's hand with the benediction, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

When we consider the infinite sacrifice made for the salvation of men, we are lost in amazement. When selfishness clamors for the victory in the hearts of men, and they are tempted to withhold their due proportion in any good work, they should strengthen their principles of right by the thought that he who was rich in Heaven's priceless treasure turned away from it all, and became poor, He had not where to lay his head. And all this sacrifice was in our behalf, that we might have eternal riches.

Christ set his own feet in the path of self-denial and sacrifice, which all his disciples must travel, if they would be exalted with him at last. He took to his own heart the sorrows which man must suffer. The minds of worldly men frequently become gross. They can only see earthly things, which eclipse the glory and value of the heavenly. Men will compass land and sea for earthly gain, and endure privation and suffering to obtain their object, yet will turn away from Heaven's attractions and not regard eternal riches. Men who are in comparative poverty are usually the ones who do the most to sustain the cause of God. They are generous with their little. They have strengthened their generous impulses by continual liberalities. When their expenditures pressed close upon the income, their passion for earthly

riches had no room or chance to strengthen. But many, when they begin to gather earthly riches, commence to calculate how long it will be before they can be in possession of a certain sum. In their anxiety to amass wealth for themselves, they fail to become rich toward God. Their benevolence does not keep pace with their accumulation. As their passion for riches increases, their affections are bound up with their treasure. The increase of their property strengthens the eager desire for more, until their giving to the Lord a tenth is considered by some a severe and unjust tax. Inspiration has said, "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them." Many have said, "If I were as rich as such an one, I would multiply my gifts in the treasury of God. I would do nothing else with my wealth but use it in the advancement of the cause of God." God has tested some of these by giving them riches; but with the riches came the fiercer temptation, and their benevolence was far less than in the days of their poverty. A grasping desire for greater riches absorbed their minds and hearts, and they committed idolatry.

He who presents to men infinite riches, and an eternal life of blessedness in his kingdom as the reward of faithful obedience, will not accept a divided heart. We are living amid the perils of the last days, where there is everything to divert the mind and allure the affections from God. Our duty will only be discerned, and appreciated when viewed in the light which shines from the life of Christ. As the sun rises in the east and passes toward the west, filling the world with light, so the true follower of Christ will be a light unto the world. He will go forth into the world as a bright and shining light, that those who are in darkness may be lightened and warmed by the rays shining forth from him. Christ says of his followers, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid."

Our great Exemplar was self-denying, and shall the course of his professed followers be in such marked contrast to his? The Saviour gave all for a perishing world, not withholding even himself. The church of God are asleep. They are enfeebled by inaction. Voices come to us from every part of the world, "Come over and help us;" but there is no answering movement. There is a feeble effort now and then; a few show that they would be co-workers with their Master; but such are frequently left to toil almost alone. There is but one missionary from our people in all the wide field in foreign countries.

The truth is mighty, but it is not carried into practice. Money alone is not sufficient to be laid upon the altar. God calls for men, volunteers, to carry the truth to other nations, and tongues, and people. It is not our numbers or our wealth that will give us a signal victory; but it is devotion to the work, moral courage, ardent love for souls, and untiring zeal, that never flags.

There are many who have looked upon the Jewish nation as a people to be pitied, because they were constantly taxed for the support of their religion; but God, who created man and provided him with all the blessings he enjoys, knew what was for his best good. And he has, through his blessing, made their nine-tenths worth more to them than the entire amount without his blessing. If any through their selfishness robbed God or brought to him an offering not perfect, disaster and loss were sure to follow them. God reads the motives of the heart. He is acquainted with the purposes of men, and will mete out to them in his own good time as they have merited.

The special system of tithing was founded upon a principle which was as enduring as the law of God. This system of tithing was a blessing to the Jews, else God would not have given it them. So also will it be a blessing to those who carry it out to the end of time. Our Heavenly Father did not originate the plan of systematic benevolence to enrich himself, but to be a great blessing to man. He saw that this system of beneficence was just what man needed.

Those churches who are the most systematic and liberal in sustaining the cause of God, are the most prosperous spiritually. True liberality in the follower of Christ identifies his interest with that of his Master. In God's dealing with the Jews and his people to the end of time, he requires systematic benevolence proportionate to their income. The plan of salvation was laid by the infinite sacrifice of the Son of God. The light of the gospel shining from the cross of Christ rebukes selfishness, and encourages liberality and benevolence. It is not to be a lamented fact that there are increasing calls to give. God, in his providence, is calling his people out from their limited sphere of action, to enter upon greater enterprises. Unlimited effort is demanded at this time when moral darkness is covering the world. Worldliness and covetousness are eating out the vitals of God's people. They should understand that it is his mercy which multiplies the demands for their means. The angel of God places benevolent acts close beside prayer. He said to Cornelius, "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God."

In the teachings of Christ, he said, "If ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" The spiritual health and prosperity of the church is dependent in a great degree upon her systematic benevolence. It is like the life blood which must flow through the whole being, vitalizing every member of the body. It increases love for the souls of our fellow men; for by self-denial and self-sacrifice we are brought into a closer relation to Jesus Christ, who for our sakes became poor.

The more we invest in the cause of God to aid in the salvation of souls, the closer to our hearts they will be brought. Were our numbers half as large, and all of these devoted workers, we should have a power that would make the world tremble. To the active workers, Christ has addressed these words, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

We shall meet opposition arising from selfish motives and from bigotry and prejudice, yet with undaunted courage and living faith, we should sow beside all waters. The agents of Satan are formidable; we shall meet them and must combat them. Our labors are not to be confined to our own country. The field is the world; the harvest is ripe. The command given the disciples just before he ascended was, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." We feel pained beyond measure to see some of our ministers hovering about the churches, apparently putting forth some little effort, but having next to nothing to show for their labors. The field is the world. Let them go out to the unbelieving world and labor to convert souls to the truth. We refer our brethren and sisters to the example of Abraham going up to Mount Moriah to offer his only son at the command of God. Here was obedience and sacrifice. Moses was in king's courts, and a prospective crown was before him. But he turned away from the tempting bribe and "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt."

The apostles counted not their lives dear unto themselves, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ. Paul and Silas suffered the loss of all things. They suffered scourging, and were in no gentle manner thrown upon the cold floor of a dungeon in a most painful position, their feet elevated and fastened in the stocks. Then did repinings and complaints reach the ear of the jailor? Oh! no. From the inner prison, voices broke the silence of midnight with songs of joy and praise to God. Deep and earnest love for the cause of their Redeemer, for which Paul and Silas suffered, cheered them.

And as the truth of God fills our hearts, absorbs our affections, and controls our lives, we also shall count it joy to suffer for the truth's sake. No prison walls, no martyr's stake, can then daunt or hinder us in the great work.

"Come, O my soul, to Calvary." Mark the humble life of the Son of God. He was a "man of sorrow and acquainted with grief." Behold his ignominy, his agony in Gethsemane, and learn what self-denial is. Are we suffering want? so was Christ, the majesty of Heaven. But his poverty was for our sakes. Are we ranked among the rich? so was he. But he consented "for our sakes to become poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich." In Christ we have self-denial exemplified. The sacrifice of Christ consisted, not merely in leaving the royal courts of Heaven, and in being tried by wicked men as a criminal and pronounced guilty, and being delivered up to die as a malefactor, but in bearing the weight of the sins of the world. The life of Christ rebukes our indifference and coldness. We are near the close of time, when Satan has come down, having great wrath, knowing that his time is short. He is working with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them which perish. The warfare has been left in our hands by our great Leader for us to carry forward with vigor. We are not doing a twentieth part of what we might do if we were awake. The work is retarded by love of ease and a lack of the self-denying spirit of which our Saviour has given us an example in his life.

Co-workers with Christ, men who feel the need of extended effort, are wanted. The work of our presses should not be lessened, but doubled. Schools should be established in different places to educate our youth preparatory to their laboring to advance the truth.

Already a great deal of time has been wasted, and angels bear to Heaven the record of our neglects. Our sleepy and unconsecrated condition has lost to us precious opportunities which God has sent to us in the persons of those who were qualified to help us in our present need. Oh! how much we need our Hannah More to aid us at this time in reaching those of other nations. Her extensive knowledge of missionary fields would give us access to those of other tongues that now we cannot approach. God brought this gift among us to meet our present emergency; but we prized not the gift, and he took her from us. She is at rest from her labors, but her self-denying works follow her. It is to be deplored that our missionary work should be retarded for the want of knowledge how to gain access to the different nations and localities in the great harvest field.

We feel anguish of spirit because some gifts are lost to us that we might now have if we had only been awake. Laborers have been kept back from the whitening harvest. It becomes the people of God to humble their hearts before him, and in the deepest humiliation to pray the Lord to pardon our apathy and selfish indulgence, and to blot out the shameful record of duties neglected, and privileges unimproved. In contemplation of the cross of Calvary the true Christian will abandon the thought of restricting his offerings to that which costs him nothing, and will hear in trumpet tones, "Go, labor in my vineyard, There's resting by-and-by."

When Jesus was about to ascend on high, he pointed to the harvest fields, and said to his followers, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel." "Freely ye have received, freely give." Shall we deny self that the wasting harvest may be gathered?

God calls for talents of influence and of means. Shall we refuse to obey? Our Heavenly Father bestows gifts and solicits a portion back, that he may test us whether we are worthy to have the gift of everlasting life. E.G.W.

