

Ellen G. White Estate

S.D.A. BIBLE COMMENTARY VOL. 4

ELLEN G. WHITE

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Ellen G. White

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Ellen G. White (1827-1915) is considered the most widely translated American author, her works having been published in more than 160 languages. She wrote more than 100,000 pages on a wide variety of spiritual and practical topics. Guided by the Holy Spirit, she exalted Jesus and pointed to the Scriptures as the basis of one's faith.

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Isaiah

Chapter 1

1 (Hebrews 11:37). Isaiah Was Sawn Asunder.—Isaiah, who was permitted by the Lord to see wonderful things, was sawn asunder, because he faithfully reproved the sins of the Jewish nation. The prophets who came to look after the Lord's vineyard, were indeed beaten and killed. "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented"—men of whom the world was not worthy. They were cruelly treated, and banished from the world (*The Signs of the Times*, February 17, 1898).

2, 3. A People Professedly Serving God.—[Isaiah 1:2, 3 quoted.] The course pursued by Israel toward God called forth these words. It was a proof of the people's perversity that they manifested less gratitude, less attachment, less acknowledgment of ownership, toward God than the animals of the field manifest toward their masters....

The first chapter of Isaiah is a description of a people professedly serving God, but walking in forbidden paths (MS 29, 1911).

4. Separation Led to Presumptuous, Foolhardy Madness.—The professed people of God had separated from God, and had lost their wisdom and perverted their understanding. They could not see afar off; for they had forgotten that they had been purged from their old sins. They moved restlessly and uncertainly under darkness, seeking to obliterate from their minds the memory of the freedom, assurance, and happiness of their former estate. They plunged into all kinds of presumptuous, foolhardy madness, placed themselves in opposition to the providences of God, and deepened the guilt that was already upon them. They listened to the charges of Satan against the divine character, and represented God as devoid of mercy and forgiveness. The prophet writes of them, saying:

"Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward" (*The Review and Herald*, August 6, 1895).

19. Obedience Leads to Perfection.—We cannot overestimate the value of simple faith and unquestioning obedience. It is by following in the path of obedience in simple faith that the character obtains perfection (Lt 119, 1895).

Chapter 3

18-23 (1 Peter 3:1-5). Beauty of Soul a Standing Rebuke.—In the third chapter of Isaiah’s prophecy mention is made of the prevailing pride of the “daughters of Zion,” with “their tinkling ornaments, ... the chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets, ... and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings, the rings, and nose jewels, the changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins, the glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the vails.” **Verses 18-23.** How different this picture from that portrayed by the apostle Peter of the God-fearing woman, who, estimating at its real value the “outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel,” chooses rather to cultivate beauty of soul, “even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.” It was “after this manner in the old time” that “the holy women ... who trusted in God, adorned themselves”; and their “chaste conversation coupled with fear” (1 Peter 3:1-5), as revealed in daily life, was ever a standing rebuke to their sisters who followed after folly (*The Review and Herald*, March 4, 1915).

Chapter 5

18-23 (ch. 8:12). Confidence in Man Blocks God’s Messages.—[Isaiah 5:18 quoted.] Men may seek to strengthen their forces by confederating together, making, as they suppose, strong societies to carry out the plans they have formed. They may lift up their souls in pride and self-sufficiency; but the One mighty in counsel does not plan with them. Their unbelief in His purposes and work, and their confidence in man, will not permit them to receive the messages He sends (*The Review and Herald*, December 22, 1896).

19-23 (ch. 50:11). Men Call Evil Good, and Good Evil.—[Isaiah 5:19-23 quoted.] The class here represented, in order to exalt their own opinions, employ a reasoning which is not authorized by the Word of God. They walk in the sparks of their own kindling. By their specious reasoning, they confuse the distinction that God desires to have drawn between good and evil. The sacred is brought down on a level with common things. Avarice and selfishness are called by false names; they are called prudence. Their rising up in independence and rebellion, their revenge and stubbornness, in their eyes are proofs of dignity, evidences of a noble mind. They act as though ignorance of divine things were not dangerous and even fatal to the soul; and they prefer their own reasoning to divine revelation, their own plans and human wisdom to the admonitions and commands of God. The piety and conscientiousness of others are called fanaticism, and those who practise truth and holiness are watched and criticized. They deride those who teach and believe the mystery of godliness, “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” The principles underlying these things are not discerned by them; and they go on in wrong-doing, leaving the bars open for Satan to find ready access to the soul (*The Review and Herald*, December 22, 1896).

20. Watch to Praise, Not Condemn.—The lips that have uttered perverse things of God’s delegated servants and have scorned the message they have borne, have put darkness for light, and light for darkness. Instead of watching, as did the Pharisees, for something to condemn in the message or the messengers, something to scoff at and deride, had they opened their hearts to the bright beams of the Sun of righteousness, they would have been offering grateful praise rather than watching for something which they could misinterpret or twist so as to find fault (*Letter 31a*, 1894).

Capable but Unconverted Men Do Great Harm.—[Isaiah 5:20 quoted.] Men may possess capabilities given them in trust of God, but if they are not humble men, daily converted men, as vessels of honor, they will do the greater harm because of their capabilities. If they are not learners of Christ Jesus, if they do not pray and keep their natural hereditary and cultivated tendencies under control, traits of character that God abhors will pervert the judgment of those who associate with them (*Letter 31a*, 1894).

Chapter 6

1-7 (Revelation 11:19). Isaiah’s Experience Represents Last-Day Church.—[Isaiah 6:1-4 quoted.] As the prophet Isaiah beheld the

glory of the Lord, he was amazed, and, overwhelmed with a sense of his own weakness and unworthiness, he cried, “Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.”

Isaiah had denounced the sin of others; but now he sees himself exposed to the same condemnation he had pronounced upon them. He had been satisfied with a cold, lifeless ceremony in his worship of God. He had not known this until the vision was given him of the Lord. How little now appeared his wisdom and talents as he looked upon the sacredness and majesty of the sanctuary. How unworthy he was! how unfitted for sacred service! His view of himself might be expressed in the language of the apostle Paul, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

But relief was sent to Isaiah in his distress. [Isaiah 6:6, 7 quoted.] ...

The vision given to Isaiah represents the condition of God’s people in the last days. They are privileged to see by faith the work that is going forward in the heavenly sanctuary. “And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament.” As they look by faith into the holy of holies, and see the work of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, they perceive that they are a people of unclean lips,—a people whose lips have often spoken vanity, and whose talents have not been sanctified and employed to the glory of God. Well may they despair as they contrast their own weakness and unworthiness with the purity and loveliness of the glorious character of Christ. But if they, like Isaiah, will receive the impression the Lord designs shall be made upon the heart, if they will humble their souls before God, there is hope for them. The bow of promise is above the throne, and the work done for Isaiah will be performed in them. God will respond to the petitions coming from the contrite heart (*The Review and Herald*, December 22, 1896).

Isaiah had a wonderful view of God’s glory. He saw the manifestation of God’s power, and after beholding His majesty, a message came to him to go and do a certain work. He felt wholly unworthy for the work. What made him esteem himself unworthy? Did he think himself unworthy before he had a view of God’s glory?—No; he imagined himself in a righteous state before God; but when the glory of the Lord of hosts was revealed to him, when he beheld the inexpressible majesty of God, he said, “I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a living coal in his hands, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar, and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.” This is the work that as individuals we need to have done for us. We want the living coal from off the altar placed upon our lips. We want to hear the word spoken, “Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged” (*The Review and Herald*, June 4, 1889).

1-8. Shekinah Glory Revealed to Isaiah.—Christ Himself was the Lord of the temple. When He should leave it, its glory would depart—that glory once visible in the holy of holies over the mercy seat, where the high priest entered only once a year, on the great day of atonement, with the blood of the slain victim (typical of the blood of the Son of God shed for the sins of the world), and sprinkled it upon the altar. This was the Shekinah, the visible pavilion of Jehovah.

It was this glory that was revealed to Isaiah, when he says, “In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple” [Isaiah 6:1-8 quoted] (MS 71, 1897).

Vision of Glory Leads to Genuine Conviction of Unworthiness.—In the year that King Uzziah died, Isaiah was permitted in vision to look into the holy place, and into the holy of holies in the heavenly sanctuary. The curtains of the innermost sanctuary were drawn aside, and a throne high and lifted up, towering as it were to the very heavens, was revealed to his gaze. An indescribable glory emanated from a personage on the throne, and His train filled the temple, as His glory will finally fill the

earth. Cherubim were on either side of the mercy-seat, as guards round the great king, and they glowed with the glory that enshrouded them from the presence of God. As their songs of praise resounded in deep, earnest notes of adoration, the pillars of the gate trembled, as if shaken by an earthquake. These holy beings sang forth the praise and glory of God with lips unpolluted with sin. The contrast between the feeble praise which he had been accustomed to bestow upon the Creator and the fervid praises of the seraphim, astonished and humiliated the prophet. He had for the time being the sublime privilege of appreciating the spotless purity of Jehovah's exalted character.

While he listened to the song of the angels, as they cried, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory," the glory, the infinite power, and the unsurpassed majesty of the Lord passed before his vision, and was impressed upon his soul. In the light of this matchless radiance that made manifest all he could bear in the revelation of the divine character, his own inward defilement stood out before him with startling clearness. His very words seemed vile to him.

Thus when the servant of God is permitted to behold the glory of the God of heaven, as He is unveiled to humanity, and realizes to a slight degree the purity of the Holy One of Israel, he will make startling confessions of the pollution of his soul, rather than proud boasts of his holiness. In deep humiliation Isaiah exclaimed, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips: ... for mine eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts." This is not that voluntary humility and servile self-reproach that so many seem to consider it a virtue to display. This vague mockery of humility is prompted by hearts full of pride and self-esteem. There are many who demerit themselves in words, who would be disappointed if this course did not call forth expressions of praise and appreciation from others. But the conviction of the prophet was genuine. As humanity, with its weakness and deformity, was brought out in contrast with the perfection of divine holiness and light and glory, he felt altogether inefficient and unworthy. How could he go and speak to the people the holy requirements of Jehovah, who was high and lifted up, and whose train filled the temple? While Isaiah was trembling and conscience-smitten, because of his impurity in the presence of this unsurpassed glory, he said, "Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar; and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me" (*The Review and Herald*, October 16, 1888).

2. Angels Fully Satisfied to Glorify God.—The seraphim before the throne are so filled with reverential awe in beholding the glory of God that they do not for an instant look upon themselves with self-complacency, or in admiration of themselves or one another. Their praise and glory are for the Lord of Hosts, who is high and lifted up, and the glory of whose train fills the temple. As they see the future, when the whole earth shall be filled with His glory, the triumphant song of praise is echoed from one to another in melodious chant, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts." They are fully satisfied to glorify God; and in His presence, beneath His smile of approbation, they wish for nothing more. In bearing His image, in doing His service and worshiping Him, their highest ambition is fully reached (*The Review and Herald*, December 22, 1896).

5-7 (Matthew 12:34-36). Consider Words in Light of Heaven.—Let every soul who claims to be a son or a daughter of God examine himself in the light of heaven; let him consider the polluted lips that make him "undone." They are the medium of communication. [Matthew 12:34, 35 quoted.] Then let them not be used in bringing from the treasure of the heart words that will dishonor God and discourage those around you, but use them for the praise and glory of God, who has formed them for this purpose. When the cleansing coal is applied from the glowing altar, the conscience will be purged from dead works to serve the living God; and when the love of Jesus is

the theme of contemplation, the words coming from human lips will be full of praise and thanksgiving to God and to the Lamb.

How many words are spoken in lightness and foolishness, in jesting and joking! This would not be so did the followers of Christ realize the truth of the words, “Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”

Harsh and unkind words, words of censure and criticism of God’s work and His messengers, are indulged in by those who profess to be His children. When these careless souls discern the greatness of God’s character, they will not mingle their spirit and attributes with His service. When our eyes look by faith into the sanctuary, and take in the reality, the importance and holiness, of the work there being done, everything of a selfish nature will be abhorred by us. Sin will appear as it is,—the transgression of God’s holy law. The atonement will be better understood; and by living, active faith, we shall see that whatever of virtue humanity possesses, it exists only in Jesus Christ, the world’s Redeemer (*The Review and Herald*, December 22, 1896).

5-8. When One Is Ready to Work With God, He Carries Message.—Isaiah had a message from the God of heaven to give to the backsliding people of Israel, and he gave them this message. He knew what elements he had to deal with; he knew the stubbornness and perversity of the heart, and how hard it would be to make any impression upon them. As he stood in the portico of the temple, the Lord revealed Himself to him. The veil of the temple was withdrawn, the door lifted, and he had a view of the holy of holies within the veil. He saw the God of Israel before the throne high and lifted up, and the train of His glory filled the temple. As Isaiah senses his own sinfulness, he cries out, “I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.” And there was seen the hand that took the live coal from off the altar, and touched his lips, and bade him be clean. Then he was ready to go with the message, and he said, “Send me”; for he knew that the Spirit of God would be with the message.

To those who are engaged in the work of God, in the conversion of souls, it would seem as though it was impossible to reach the obdurate heart. This is how Isaiah felt, but when he saw that there was a God above the cherubim, and that they were ready to work with God, he was ready to carry the message (*The Review and Herald*, May 3, 1887).

6. Live Coal Symbolizes Purity and Power.—The live coal is symbolical of purification. If it touches the lips, no impure word will fall from them. The live coal also symbolizes the potency of the efforts of the servants of the Lord. God hates all coldness, all commonness, all cheap efforts. Those who labor acceptably in His cause, must be men who pray fervently, and whose works are wrought in God; and they will never have cause to be ashamed of their record. They will have an abundant entrance into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, and their reward will be given them,—even eternal life (*The Review and Herald*, October 16, 1888).

Chapter 8

12 (see EGW comments on ch. 5:18-23). Satan Seeks to Widen Distance Between Heaven and Earth.—The satanic agencies are constantly at work, sowing and watering the seeds of rebellion against the law of God, and Satan is gathering souls under his black banner of revolt. He forms a confederacy with human beings to contend against purity and holiness. He has worked diligently, perseveringly, increasing the number who will confederate with him. By his representations he seeks to widen the distance between heaven and earth, and he grows into the conviction that he can wear out the patience of God, extinguish His love for man, and bring condemnation upon the whole human family (*The Review and Herald*, October 21, 1902).

No Confederacy With Those Opposing the Truth.—Let the watchmen on the walls of Zion not join with those who are making of none effect the truth as it is in Christ. Let them not join the confederacy of infidelity, popery, and Protestantism in exalting tradition above Scripture, reason above revelation, and human talent above

the divine influence and the vital power of godliness (*The Review and Herald*, March 24, 1896).

The Divine Touch Needed.—The gospel is now resolutely opposed on every hand. Never was the confederacy of evil greater than at the present time. The spirits of darkness are combining with human agencies to set them firmly against the commandments of God. Traditions and falsehoods are exalted above the Scriptures; reason and science above revelation; human talent above the teachings of the Spirit; forms and ceremonies above the vital power of godliness. We need the divine touch (*The Review and Herald*, March 19, 1895).

Fallen Men and Fallen Angels in Same Confederacy.—Through apostasy, fallen men and fallen angels are in the same confederacy, leagued to work against good. They are united in a desperate companionship. Through his evil angels, Satan contrives to form an alliance with professedly pious men, and thus he leavens the church of God. He knows that if he can induce men, as he induced the angels, to join in rebellion, under the guise of servants of God, he will have in them his most successful allies in his enterprise against heaven. Under the name of godliness, he can inspire them with his own accusing spirit, and lead them to charge God's servants with evil and guile. They are his trained detectives; their work is to create feuds, to make charges which create discord and bitterness among brethren, to set tongues in active service for Satan, to sow seeds of dissension by watching for evil, and by speaking of that which will create discord.

I beseech all who engage in the work of murmuring and complaining because something has been said or done that does not suit them, and that does not, as they think, give them due consideration, to remember that they are carrying on the very work begun in heaven by Satan. They are following in his track, sowing unbelief, discord, and disloyalty; for no one can entertain feelings of disaffection, and keep them to himself. He must tell others that he is not treated as he should be. Thus they are led to murmur and complain. This is the root of bitterness springing up, whereby many are defiled.

Thus Satan works today through his evil angels. He confederates with men who claim to be in the faith; and those who are trying to carry forward the work of God with fidelity, having no man's person in admiration, working without hypocrisy and partiality, will have just as severe trials brought against them as Satan can bring through those who claim to love God. Proportionate to the light and knowledge these opposers have is Satan's success. The root of bitterness strikes deep, and is communicated to others. Thus many are defiled. Their statements are confused and untruthful, their principles are unscrupulous, and Satan finds in them the very helpers he needs (*The Review and Herald*, September 14, 1897).

What Is a Confederacy?—The question has been asked, What do you mean by a confederacy? Who have formed confederacies? You know what a confederacy is,—a union of men in a work that does not bear the stamp of pure, straightforward, unswerving integrity (MS 29, 1911).

(2 Corinthians 6:17.) The wicked are being bound up in bundles, bound up in trusts, in unions, in confederacies. Let us have nothing to do with these organizations. God is our Ruler, our Governor, and He calls us to come out from the world and be separate. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing." If we refuse to do this, if we continue to link up with the world, and to look at every matter from a worldly standpoint, we shall become like the world. When worldly policy and worldly ideas govern our transactions, we cannot stand on the high and holy platform of eternal truth (MS 71, 1903).

Good and Evil Angels in Human Form on Field of Action.—Satanic agencies in human form will take part in this last great conflict to oppose the building up of the kingdom of God. And heavenly angels in human guise will be on the field of action. Men and women have confederated to oppose the Lord God of heaven, and the church is only half awake to the situation. There needs to be much more of prayer, much more of earnest effort among professed believers.

The two opposing parties will continue to exist till the closing up of the last

great chapter in this world's history. Satanic agencies are in every city. We cannot afford to be off our guard for one moment (*Letter 42*, 1909).

Chapter 14

12-14 (see EGW on Ezekiel 28:13-15). Satan's Rebellion of Long Standing.—The records of some are similar to that of the exalted angel who was given a position next to Jesus Christ in the heavenly courts. Lucifer was enshrouded with glory as the covering cherub. Yet this angel whom God had created, and entrusted with power, became desirous of being as God. He gained the sympathy of some of his associates by suggesting thoughts of criticism regarding the government of God. This evil seed was scattered in a most seducing manner; and after it had sprung up and taken root in the minds of many, he gathered the ideas that he himself had first implanted in the minds of others, and brought them before the highest order of angels as the thoughts of other minds against the government of God. Thus, by ingenious methods of his own devising, Lucifer introduced rebellion in heaven.

God desired that a change take place, and that the work of Satan be brought out in its genuine aspect. But the exalted angel standing next to Christ was opposed to the Son of God. The underworking was so subtle that it could not be made to appear before the heavenly host as the thing that it really was; and so there was war in heaven, and Satan was expelled with all who would not stand on the side of loyalty to God's government. The Lord God stood forth as Supreme Ruler.

This condition of things had existed a long period of time before Satan was unmasked and the evil ones expelled (*Letter 162*, 1906).

Chapter 25

1-4. Hang His Mercies in Memory's Hall.—[Isaiah 25:1-4 quoted]. Wherein do we show our gratitude to God? His benefits to us are inexpressibly great. Do we frame His mercies and blessings, and hang them in memory's hall, where we can see them and be led to offer thanksgiving to God for His goodness and love? There are thousands upon thousands who have no eyes to see, no ears to hear, no hearts to appreciate God's work in their behalf. They pass by the goodness of the Lord as theirs by right (*MS 145*, 1899).

Chapter 26

19. Sleeping Saints Guarded as Precious Jewels.—[Isaiah 26:19 quoted]. The Life-giver will call up His purchased possession in the first resurrection, and until that triumphant hour, when the last trump shall sound and the vast army shall come forth to eternal victory, every sleeping saint will be kept in safety and will be guarded as a precious jewel, who is known to God by name. By the power of the Saviour that dwelt in them while living and because they were partakers of the divine nature, they are brought forth from the dead (*Letter 65a*, 1894).

20 (ch. 49:16). How to Prepare for Future Protection.—When tempted to sin, let us remember that Jesus is pleading for us in the heavenly sanctuary. When we put away our sins and come to Him in faith, He takes our names on His lips, and presents them to His Father, saying, "I have graven them upon the palms of my hands; I know them by name." And the command goes forth to the angels to protect them. Then in the day of fierce trial He will say, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." What are the chambers in which they are to hide?—They are the protection of Christ and holy angels. The people of God are not at this time all in one place. They are in different companies, and in all parts of the earth; and they will be tried singly, not in groups. Every one must stand the test for himself (*The Review and Herald*, November 19, 1908).

21. Earth's Cup of Iniquity Soon Full.—The point is fast being reached when the iniquity of transgressors will be to the full. God gives nations a certain time of probation. He sends light and evidence, that, if received, will save them, but if refused as the Jews refused light, indignation and punishment will fall upon them. If men refuse to be benefited, and choose darkness rather than light, they will reap the results

of their choice. “Behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.” The professed Christian world is advancing, as did the Jewish nation, from one degree of sinfulness to a greater degree, refusing warning after warning, and rejecting a Thus saith the Lord, while crediting the fables of men. The Lord God will soon arise in His wrath, and pour out His judgments upon those who are repeating the sins of the inhabitants of the Noachic world. Those whose hearts are fully set in them to do evil, as were the hearts of the inhabitants of Sodom, will like them be destroyed. The fact that God had long forbearance, patience and mercy, the fact that His judgments have been long delayed, will not make the punishment any less severe when it does come (Undated MS 145).

Chapter 30

15. Usefulness Not Proved by Noise and Bustle.—We need a calm waiting upon God. The need of this is imperious. It is not the noise and bustle we make in the world which proves our usefulness. See how silently God works We do not hear the noise of His steps, and yet He is walking about us, laboring for our good. Jesus did not seek for notoriety; His life-giving virtue was going out to the needy and the afflicted through silent actions, whose influence extended far into all countries and was felt and expressed in the life of millions of human beings. Those who desire to labor with God have need of His Spirit every day; they need to walk and labor in meekness and humility of spirit, without seeking to accomplish extraordinary things, satisfied to do the work before them and doing it faithfully. Men may not see or appreciate their efforts, but the names of these faithful children of God are written in heaven among His noblest workers, as scattering His seed in view of a glorious harvest. “Ye shall know them by their fruits” (MS 24, 1887).

Take Time to Rest, Think, Appreciate.—The Lord wants human beings to take time to rest, time to think of and appreciate heavenly things. Those who do not value the things of heaven sufficiently to give time to them will at last lose all (*Letter* 181, 1903).

Chapter 40

1, 2. Some Jews, Firm to Principle, Influenced Idolatrous Companions.—The covenant mercy of God led Him to interpose in behalf of His people Israel after their severe chastisement before their enemies. Israel had chosen to walk in her own wisdom and righteousness in the place of the wisdom and righteousness of God, and as a result her nation was ruined. God permitted them to suffer under a double yoke, that they might be humiliated and repent. But in their dispersion and captivity, the Jews were not left in a hopeless state. Encouragement was given them, for through this humiliation they were to be brought to seek the Lord. God gave to Isaiah a message for this people: [Isaiah 40:1, 2 quoted].

When the Jews were dispersed from Jerusalem, there were among them young men and women who were firm as a rock to principle, men and women who had not pursued a course to make the Lord ashamed to call them His people. These were sad at heart for the backsliding which they could not prevent. These innocent ones must suffer with the guilty; but God would give them strength sufficient for their day. It was to them that the message of encouragement was sent. The hope of the nation lay in those young men and maidens who would preserve their integrity. And in their captivity these obedient ones had an influence over their idolatrous companions. Had all who were taken captive held firmly to correct principles, they would have imparted light in every place where they were scattered. But they remained impenitent, and still heavier punishment came upon them. Their calamities were sent for their purification. God would bring them to the place where they would be instructed (MS 151, 1899).

9-11. Israel Fully Instructed Regarding Coming Saviour.—Isaiah saw Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem amid the praises and rejoicing of the people. His prophetic words are eloquent in their simplicity. [Isaiah 40:9-11 quoted.]

Inspiration is revealed in this record of Christ's work. These closing chapters of the book of Isaiah should be diligently studied; for they are full of the gospel of Christ. They reveal to us that Israel was fully instructed in regard to the coming Saviour (MS 151, 1899).

10. Our Daily Reward.—Whenever He comes to us, His reward is with Him. He does not leave it in heaven, but gives it to us every day. Daily He gives us confidence and light and blessing. Daily our hearts beat in unison with His great heart of infinite love (MS 116, 1902).

12-14. Man Can Teach God Nothing.—[Isaiah 40:12-14 quoted.] Men sometimes suppose that they discover new scientific truths; but they cannot teach God anything. Our God is a God of infinite knowledge (MS 116, 1902).

12-27. Questions for Meditation.—These questions are directed to us as truly as they were to the Israelites. Can we answer them (MS 116, 1902)?

18-28. Varieties of Gods Men Worship.—The Lord urges His supremacy. But Satan well knows that the worship of the living God elevates, ennobles, and exalts a nation. He knows that idol-worship does not elevate, but that it degrades man's ideas, by associating with worship that which is base and corrupt. He is at work constantly to draw the mind away from the only true and living God. He leads men to give honor and glory to objects that human hands have made or to soulless creatures that God has created. The Egyptians and other heathen nations had many strange gods—creatures of their own fanciful imagination.

The Jews, after their long captivity, would not make any image. The image on the Roman ensign or banner, they called an abomination, especially when these emblems were placed in a prominent place for them to respect. Such respect they regarded as a violation of the second commandment. When the Roman ensign was set up in the holy place in the temple, they looked upon it as an abomination....

To make an image of God dishonors Him. No one should bring into service the power of imagination to worship that which belittles God in the mind and associates Him with common things. Those who worship God must worship Him in spirit and in truth. They must exercise living faith. Their worship will then be controlled not by the imagination, but by genuine faith.

Let men worship and serve the Lord God, and Him only. Let not selfish pride be lifted up and served as a god. Let not money be made a god. If sensuality is not kept under the control of the higher powers of the mind, base passion will rule the being. Anything that is made the subject of undue thought and admiration, absorbing the mind, is a God chosen before the Lord. God is a searcher of the heart. He distinguishes between true heart-service and idolatry (MS 126, 1901).

26 (Psalm 19:1). Angels Enlighten Minds as We Study God's Works.—God calls men to look upon the heavens. See Him in the wonders of the starry heavens. [Isaiah 40:26 quoted.] We are not merely to gaze upon the heavens; we are to consider the works of God. He would have us study the works of infinity, and from this study, learn to love and reverence and obey Him. The heavens and the earth with their treasures are to teach the lessons of God's love, care, and power.

Satan will manufacture his diversions that men may not think about God. The world, filled with sport and pleasure-loving, is always thirsting for some new interest. And how little time and thought are given to the Creator of the heavens and the earth. God calls upon His creatures to turn their attention from the confusion and perplexity around them, and admire His handiwork. The heavenly bodies are worthy of contemplation. God has made them for the benefit of man, and as we study His works, angels of God will be by our side to enlighten our minds, and guard them from satanic deception. As you look at the wonderful things God's hand has made, let your proud, foolish heart feel its dependence and inferiority. As you consider these things, you will have a sense of God's condescension (MS 96, 1899).

All Bounties Come to Man Through the Cross.—The sun and the moon were made by Him; there is not a star that beautifies

the heavens which He did not make. There is not an article of food upon our tables that He has not provided for our sustenance. The stamp and superscription of God is upon it all. Everything is included in and abundantly supplied to man, through the one unspeakable Gift, the only begotten Son of God. He was nailed to the cross that all these bounties might flow to God's workmanship (*Letter* 79, 1897).

Chapter 42

1-4. Christ Would Encourage Faith and Hope.—[Isaiah 42:1, 2 quoted.] He [Christ] will not be like the teachers of His day. The ostentation and show and parade of piety revealed in the priests and Pharisees is not His way. [Isaiah 42:3, 4 quoted.] Christ saw the work of the priests and rulers. The very ones who needed help, the afflicted, the distressed, were treated with words of censure and rebuke, and He forbore to speak any word that would break the feeble reed. The dimly burning wick of faith and hope, He would encourage, and not quench. He would feed His flock like a shepherd; He would gather the lambs with His arms, and carry them in His bosom (MS 151, 1899).

5-12. Faithfulness Leads Men to Praise God.—[Isaiah 42:5-12 quoted.] This work had been given to Israel, but they had neglected their God-appointed work. Had they been faithful in all parts of the Lord's vineyard, souls would have been converted. The Lord's praise would have been heard from the ends of the earth. From the wilderness and the cities thereof, and from the tops of the mountains, men would have shouted His praise, and told of His glory (MS 151, 1899).

13. We Gain Victory in His Power.—The issue of the battle does not rest upon the strength of mortal man. "The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies." In the power of Him who rides forth conquering and to conquer, weak, finite man may gain the victory (MS 151, 1899).

21. God's Army Magnifies the Law.—Those who belong to Christ's army must work with concerted action. They cannot be faithful soldiers unless they obey orders. United action is essential. An army in which every part acts without reference to the other parts, has no real strength. In order to add new territory to Christ's kingdom, His soldiers must act in concert.... He calls for a united army, which moves steadily forward, not for a company composed of independent atoms. The strength of His army is to be used for one great purpose. Its efforts are to be concentrated upon one great point—the magnifying of the laws of His kingdom before the world, before angels, and before men (MS 82, 1900).

Chapter 43

6, 7. See EGW on Genesis 2:16, 17, Vol. I, p. 1082.

10. See EGW on Proverbs 1:10, Vol. III, p. 1155.

Chapter 48

10. God's Children Always Being Tested.—God's children are always being tested in the furnace of affliction. If they endure the first trial, it is not necessary for them to pass through a similar ordeal the second time; but if they fail, the trial is brought to them again and again, each time being still more trying and severe. Thus opportunity after opportunity is placed before them of gaining the victory and proving themselves true to God. But if they continue to manifest rebellion, God is compelled at last to remove His Spirit and light from them (MS 69, 1912).

Sorrow and trial must come to all, and is beautiful only as it works to polish, to sanctify, and refine the soul as a fit instrument to do service for the Lord (*Letter* 69, 1897).

Chapter 49

16. See EGW on ch. 26:20.

Chapter 50

10, 11 (see EGW comments on ch. 5:19-23). Walk in God's Light, Not Own Sparks.—The Lord has presented before me that those who have been in any measure blinded by the enemy, and who have not fully recovered themselves from the snare of Satan, will be in peril because they cannot

discern light from heaven, and will be inclined to accept a falsehood. This will affect the whole tenor of their thoughts, their decisions, their propositions, their counsels. The evidences that God has given are no evidence to them, because they have blinded their own eyes by choosing darkness rather than light. Then they will originate something they call light, which the Lord calls sparks of their own kindling, by which they will direct their steps. The Lord declares, “Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have at mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.” Jesus said, “For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.” “I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.” “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”

By many, the words which the Lord sent will be rejected, and the words that man may speak will be received as light and truth. Human wisdom will lead away from self-denial, from consecration, and will devise many things that tend to make of no effect God’s messages. We cannot with any safety rely upon men who are not in close connection with God. They accept the opinions of men, but cannot discern the voice of the true Shepherd, and their influence will lead many astray, though evidence is piled upon evidence before their eyes, testifying to the truth that God’s people should have for this time (*Letter 1f*, 1890).

Chapter 53

1-3. Christ’s Grace and Virtue Did Not Appeal to Jews.—[Isaiah 53:1-3 quoted.] These words do not mean that Christ was unattractive in person. In the eyes of the Jews, Christ had no beauty that they should desire Him. They looked for a Messiah who would come with outward display and worldly glory, one who would do great things for the Jewish nation, exalting it above every other nation on the earth. But Christ came with His divinity hidden by the garb of humanity, unobtrusive, humble, poor. They compared this man with the proud boasts they had made, and they could see no beauty in Him. They did not discern the holiness and purity of His character. The grace and virtue revealed in His life did not appeal to them (*MS 33*, 1911).

2, 3. A Picture That Will Subdue and Humble.—Prophecy foretold that Christ was to appear as a root out of dry ground. “He hath no form nor comeliness,” wrote Isaiah, “and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.” This chapter should be studied. It presents Christ as the Lamb of God. Those who are lifted up with pride, whose souls are filled with vanity, should look upon this picture of their Redeemer, and humble themselves in the dust. The entire chapter should be committed to memory. Its influence will subdue and humble the soul defiled by sin and uplifted by self-exaltation.

Think of Christ’s humiliation. He took upon Himself fallen, suffering human nature, degraded and defiled by sin. He took our sorrows, bearing our grief and shame. He endured all the temptations wherewith man is beset. He united humanity with divinity: a divine spirit dwelt in a temple of flesh. He united Himself with the temple. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,” because by so doing He could associate with the sinful, sorrowing sons and daughters of Adam (*The Youth’s Instructor*, December 20, 1900).

5. Christ Can Ransom Every Soul.—It was not alone by dying on the cross that Christ accomplished His work of saving men. The ignominy and suffering and humiliation was a part of His mission. “He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.” This penalty Christ

bore for the sins of the transgressor; He has borne the punishment for every man and for this reason He can ransom every soul, however fallen his condition, if he will accept the law of God as his standard of righteousness (MS 77, 1899).

7, 9. Satan Assailed Christ, Provoked No Retaliation.—Satan assailed Him [Christ] in every point, yet He sinned not in thought, word, or deed. He did no violence, neither was guile found in His mouth. Walking in the midst of sin, He was holy, harmless, undefiled. He was wrongfully accused, yet He opened not His mouth to justify Himself. How many now, when accused of that of which they are not guilty, feel that there is a time when forbearance ceases to be a virtue, and losing their temper, speak words which grieve the Holy Spirit (MS 42, 1901)?

11. See EGW on Zechariah 9:16.

Chapter 54

Every Specification to Be Fulfilled.—All the fifty-fourth chapter of Isaiah is applicable to the people of God, and every specification of the prophecy will be fulfilled. The Lord will not forsake His people in their time of trial. He says, “For a small moment have I forsaken you; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.” Are these words of comfort spoken to those who are making void the law of God? No, no, the promise is for those who amid general apostasy, keep the commandments of God, and lift up the moral standard before the eyes of the world who have forsaken the ordinance, and broken the everlasting covenant [Isaiah 54:9-13 quoted] (RH Aug. 20, 1895).

Chapter 57

14. Every Hindrance Must Be Removed.—[Isaiah 57:14 quoted.] Is not this the very work that the Lord has given us to do in connection with those who see and feel the importance of the work that must be done in the earth that the truth may triumph gloriously? Every man who undertakes to hedge up the way of the servants of God, binding them about by human restrictions, so that they cannot follow the leadings of the Spirit of God, is hindering the advance of the work of God.

The Lord sends the message, “Take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my people.” Earnest effort is to be put forth to counterwork the influences that have kept back the message for this time. A solemn work is to be done in a short space of time (*Letter 42*, 1909).

15-19. Peace Only for the Humble.—[Isaiah 57:15-19 quoted.] These words are addressed to those who, awake to their true situation and susceptible to the influence of the Spirit of God, humble themselves before God with contrite hearts. But to those who will not heed the reproof of God, who are determined and froward, and who set themselves to go on in their own way, God cannot speak peace. He cannot heal them; for they will not acknowledge that they need healing. He declares their true condition, “The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt” (*Letter 106*, 1896).

Chapter 58

A Wide and Extensive Vineyard Opened.—The piety and advanced spiritual knowledge and growth of a church is proportionate to the zeal, piety, and missionary intelligence that has been brought into it, and carried out of it to be a blessing to the very ones who need our assistance the most. Again I urge you to consider Isaiah 58, which opens a wide and extensive vineyard to be worked upon the lines which the Lord has pointed out. When this is done there will be an increase of moral sources and the church will no more remain almost stationary. There will be blessing and power attending their labor. The selfishness that has bound up their souls they have overcome, and now their light is being given to the world in clear, bright rays of a living faith and godly example. The Lord has His promises for all who will do His requirements. [Psalm 41:1-3; 37:3; Proverbs 3:9, 10; 11:24, 25; Proverbs 19:17; Isaiah 58:10, 11 quoted.]

The Word of God is full of precious promises, as the above (MS 14a, 1897).

In our work we shall find a high profession of piety and much outward exactness

bound up with great inward wickedness. The people represented in Isaiah 58 complain that the Lord allows their services to go unnoticed. This complaint is the expression of hearts unsubdued by grace, rebellious against the truth. Those who receive the truth which works by love and purifies the soul are loyal to God, honoring Him by obedience to His law, which is holy, just, and good. The spirit of true fasting and prayer is the spirit which yields mind, heart, and will to God.

Ministers of God have been guilty of the sin of disregarding a “Thus saith the Lord.” They have led the members of their churches to observe rites which have no foundation in the word of God, but are in direct opposition to His law. By perversion and misrepresentation of the Word of God, they have caused the people to commit sin. God will reward them according to their works. Even as did the priests and rulers in the time of Christ, they have caused the people to err. Christ says of them as He said of the Jewish leaders, “In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” (MS 28, 1900).

1. The Only Course of Safety.—My brethren, you need to study more carefully the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah. This chapter marks out the only course that we can follow with safety....

The prophet receives this word from the Lord—a message startling in its clearness and force:

“Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.” Though they are called the people of God, the house of Jacob, though they profess to be linked with God in obedience and fellowship, they are far from Him. Wonderful privileges and promises have been given to them, but they have betrayed their trust. With no words of flattery must the message be given them. “*Show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.*” Show them where they are making a mistake. Set their danger before them. Tell them of the sins they are committing, while at the same time they pride themselves on their righteousness. Apparently seeking God, they are forgetting Him, forgetting that He is a God of love and compassion, long suffering and goodness, dealing justly and loving mercy. Worldly policy has come into their business and religious life. Their hearts are not purified through the truth. God looks on their outward ceremonies of humility as a solemn mockery. He regards all religious sham as an insult to Himself.

The people of whom the prophet spoke made a high profession of piety, and pointed to their fasting and to other external forms as an evidence of their piety. But their deeds were tainted by the leprosy of selfishness and covetousness. They had nothing except that which they had first received from God. He bestowed His goods on them that they might be His helping hand, doing what Christ would do were He in their place, giving a true representation of the principles of heaven (*Letter* 76, 1902)

1, 2. An Unmuffled Message.—Our work now is to rouse the people. Satan with all his angels has come down with great power, to work with every conceivable deception to counterwork the work of God. The Lord has a message for His people. This message will be borne, whether men will accept or reject it. As in the days of Christ, there will be the deep plottings of the powers of darkness, but the message must not be muffled with smooth words or fair speeches, crying peace, peace, when there is no peace, to those who are turning away from God. “There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.” [Isaiah 58:1, 2, quoted.]

The whole chapter is applicable to those who are living in this period of the earth’s history. Consider this chapter attentively; for it will be fulfilled (MS 36, 1897.)

1-4. Sins of Israel Are Sins Today.—[Isaiah 58:1-4 quoted.] ... The house of Jacob, at the time this warning was given to Isaiah, appeared to be a very zealous people, seeking God daily, and delighting to know His ways; but in reality they were filled with presumptuous self-confidence. They were not walking in the truth. Goodness, mercy, and love were not practiced. While presenting an appearance of sorrow for their sins, they were cherishing pride and avarice. At the very time when they were showing such outward humiliation,

they would exact hard labor from those under them or in their employ. They placed a high estimate on all the good that they had done, but a very low estimate on the services of others. They despised and oppressed the poor. And their fasting only gave them a higher opinion of their own goodness.

There are sins of this same character among us today, and they bring the rebuke of God upon His church. Wherever such sins are found, seasons of fasting and prayer are indeed necessary; but they must be accompanied with sincere repentance and decided reformation. Without such contrition of soul, these seasons only increase the guilt of the wrong-doer. The Lord has specified the fast He has chosen, the one He will accept. It is that which bears fruit to His glory, in repentance, in devotion, in true piety. [Isaiah 58:6, 7 quoted.]

In the fast that God has chosen, mercy, tenderness, and compassion will be exercised. Avarice will be put away, and fraud and oppression will be repented of and renounced. All the authority and influence will be used to help the poor and oppressed. If this were the condition of the world, it would no more be a proverb, "Truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter;" "he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey" (*The Review and Herald*, October 13, 1891)

1-5. A Reformatory Influence From God Needed.—[Isaiah 58:1-3 quoted.] The people here described realize that they have not the favor of God; but instead of seeking His favor in His own way, they enter into a controversy with God. They ask why, since they observe so many ceremonies, the Lord does not give them special recognition. God answers their complaints: "Behold, in the day of your fast, ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours. Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high." These fasts are only outward show, mere pretense, a mockery of humility. These worshipers, while mourning and lamenting, retain all their objectionable traits of character. Their hearts are not humbled, nor cleansed from spiritual defilement. They have not received the softening showers of the grace of God. They are destitute of the Holy Spirit, destitute of the sweetness of the heavenly influence. They manifest no repentance, nor faith that works by love and purifies the soul. They are unjust and selfish in their dealings, mercilessly oppressing those whom they regard as their inferiors. Yet they charge God with a neglect to manifest His power to them, and exalt them above others because of their righteousness. The Lord sends them a message of positive reproof, showing why they are not visited by His grace (MS 48, 1900).

5-7. Christians Not a Band of Mourners.—We have everything to be thankful for. Never ought Christians to move along like a band of mourners in a funeral train. God does not require this of His followers. He does not ask them to spread sackcloth and ashes under them. "Is it such a fast that I have chosen?" He asks; "a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?" God tells us what kind of fast He has chosen. "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?" This is the fast He wishes us to observe. [Isaiah 58:7 quoted.] In these words our duty is outlined. God shows us where we should place our treasures. As we follow in the path of self-denial and self sacrifice, helping the needy and suffering, we shall lay up treasure before the throne of God (MS 31, 1901).

Outward Signs Alone Are Valueless.—The outward signs of fasting and prayer, without a broken and contrite spirit, are of no value in God's sight. The inward work of grace is needed. Humiliation of soul is essential. God looks upon this. He will graciously receive those who will humble their hearts before Him. He will hear their petitions and heal their backslidings.

Ministers and people need the work of purification in their souls, that God's judgments may be turned away from them. God is waiting, waiting for humiliation and repentance. He will receive all who

will turn unto Him with their whole heart (MS 33, 1903).

Help Those Suffering for Truth's Sake.—[Isaiah 58:5-7 quoted.] God's cause embraces every needy, suffering saint. We are not selfishly to single out a few relatives and friends and help them, letting our work end here. All the needy who come to our notice are to be helped, but especially those who are suffering for the truth's sake. If we neglect this work, God will hold us accountable. Shall we not as a people who work righteousness, follow the conditions God has laid down, and be doers of His Word (MS 145, 1899)?

6. No Yokes to Be Placed.—The Lord has not given man the work of putting yokes on the necks of His people, binding them in such a way that they are not free to look to Him and to be led and guided by Him. It is not the Lord's design that His people shall be made amenable to their fellow-men, who are themselves wholly dependent on God (*Letter* 76, 1902).

8 (see EGW comments on Zechariah 4:12). God Needs Human Agencies.—We are to put into practice the precepts of the law, and thus have righteousness before us; the reward will be God's glory. The light of the righteousness of Christ will be our front guard, and the glory of the Lord will be our reward. Let us thank the Lord for this assurance. Let us constantly stand in a position where the Lord God of heaven can favor us. Let us consider that it is our high privilege to be in connection with God—to be His helping hand.

In God's great plan for the redemption of a lost race, He has placed Himself under the necessity of using human agencies as His helping hand. He must have a helping hand, in order to reach humanity. He must have the cooperation of those who will be active, quick to see opportunities, quick to discern what must be done for their fellow men (NL No. 23, p. 1).

A Visible Righteousness Required.—Note the inspired promise of the prophet to those who do all in their power to relieve distress, both physical and spiritual. [Isaiah 58:8 quoted.]

As Christians we are to have a righteousness that shall be developed and seen—a righteousness that represents the character of Jesus Christ when He was in our world (MS 43, 1908).

8-14. Characteristics of True Reformers.—Here are given the characteristics of those who shall be reformers, who will bear the banner of the third angel's message, those who avow themselves God's commandment-keeping people, and who honor God, and are earnestly engaged, in the sight of all the universe, in building up the old waste places. Who is it that calls them, The repairers of the breach, The restorers of paths to dwell in? It is God. Their names are registered in heaven as reformers, restorers, as raising the foundations of many generations (*The Review and Herald*, October 13, 1891).

9, 10. Compassion Causes Light to Rise.—[Isaiah 58:9, 10 quoted.] All around us are afflicted souls. Let us search out these suffering ones, and speak a word in season to comfort their hearts. Here and there—everywhere—we shall find them. Let us ever be channels through which may flow to them the refreshing waters of compassion. To those who minister to the necessities of the hungry and afflicted, the promise is, "Then shall thy light rise in obscurity."

Many are in obscurity. They have lost their bearings. They know not what course to pursue. Let the perplexed ones search out others who are in perplexity, and speak to them words of hope and encouragement. When they begin to do this work, the light of heaven will reveal to them the path that they should follow. By their words of consolation to the afflicted they themselves will be consoled. By helping others, they themselves will be helped out of their difficulties. Joy takes the place of sadness and gloom. The heart, filled with the Spirit of God, glows with warmth toward every fellow being. Every such an one is no longer in darkness; for his "darkness" is "as the noon day" (MS 116, 1902).

11. God's Guidance Gives Clear Discernment.—Of him who walks in the way of life everlasting, using his blessings to bless others, the prophet Isaiah declares: "The Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered

garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.”

These blessings we need. We need the water of life that flows from Jesus Christ, which will be in us a well of water springing up into everlasting life. “The Lord shall guide thee continually.” When we are guided by the Lord, we shall have clear discernment. We shall not call righteousness unrighteousness, nor think that things that the Lord has forbidden are right. We shall understand where the Lord is working.

Many have not understood this. There are some who I know have been led astray by the enemy. But God wants to make you a partaker of the divine nature. He wants no yoke of human authority on your neck, but that you shall look to Him who is able to save to the uttermost every one that comes to Him in righteousness and truth. We have no time to tamper with the enemy; for we are very near the close of this earth’s history (MS 43, 1908).

12-14 (Revelation 11:19; 14:9-12). Sabbathkeepers Repair the Breach.—[Isaiah 58:8-14 quoted.] Where do we find the people who are thus addressed? Who is it that shall build the old waste places, and raise up the foundation of many generations? Where are the people who have had light from heaven to see that a breach has been made in the law of God?

In the Revelation, John says, “The temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament.” Revelation 11:19. John saw in vision the Lord’s people looking for His coming and searching for truth. As the temple of God was opened unto His people, the light of the law of God, which was in the ark, shone forth. Those who receive this light are brought to view in the proclamation of the third angel’s message.

This angel is seen flying in the midst of heaven, “saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.... Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”

This is the people that are repairing the breach in the law of God. They see that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment has been supplanted by a spurious sabbath, a day that has no sanction in the Word of God. Amid great opposition they become loyal to their God, and take their position under the standard of the third angel (MS 48, 1900).

As the end approaches, the testimonies of God’s servants will become more decided and more powerful, flashing the light of truth upon the systems of error and oppression that have so long held the supremacy. The Lord has sent us messages for this time to establish Christianity upon an eternal basis, and all who believe present truth must stand, not in their own wisdom, but in God; and raise up the foundation of many generations. These will be registered in the books of heaven as repairers of the breach, the restorers of paths to dwell in. We are to maintain the truth because it is truth, in the face of the bitterest opposition. God is at work upon human minds; it is not man alone that is working. The great illuminating power is from Christ; the brightness of His example is to be kept before the people in every discourse (*Letter 1f*, 1890).

Whole-souled Men to Stand in the Gap.—I write this because many in the church are represented to me as seeing men like trees walking. They must have another and deeper experience before they discern the snares spread to take them in the net of the deceiver. There must be no halfway work done now. The Lord calls for stanch, decided, whole-souled men and women to stand in the gap, and make up the hedge. [Isaiah 58:12-14 quoted.]

There is a decided testimony to be borne by all our ministers in all our churches. God has permitted apostasies to take place in order to show how little dependence can be placed in man. We are always to look to God; His word is not Yea and Nay, but Yea and Amen (NL No. 19, pp. 2, 3).

13, 14. See EGW on Exodus 20:1-17, Vol. I.

Chapter 59

13-17 (Revelation 12:17). Satan Setting Trained Agents at Work.—The condition of the world at the time of Christ is well described by the prophet Isaiah. He says that the people were found “transgressing and lying against the Lord, and departing away from our God.” [Isaiah 59:13-17 quoted.]

The condition of the world previous to the first appearing of Christ is a picture of the condition of the world just previous to His second advent. The same iniquity will exist, Satan manifests the same delusive power upon the minds of men. He is setting his trained agents at work, and moving them to intense activity. He is securing his army of human agents to engage in the last conflict against the Prince of life, to overthrow the law of God, which is the foundation of His throne. Satan will work with miraculous presentations to confirm men in the belief that he is what he claims to be,—the prince of this world, and that victory is his. He will turn his forces against those who are loyal to God, but though he may cause pain, distress, and human agony, he cannot defile the soul. He may cause affliction to the people of God as he did to Christ, but he cannot cause one of Christ’s little ones to perish. The people of God in these last days must expect to enter into the thick of the conflict; for the prophetic Word says, “The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (*Letter 43*, 1895).

Chapter 60

1 (Psalm 8:3; 147:4; Daniel 12:3). Each to Give His Measure of Light.—Every shining star which God has placed in the heavens obeys His mandate, and gives its distinctive measure of light to make beautiful the heavens at night; so let every converted soul show the measure of light committed to him; and as it shines forth the light will increase and grow brighter. Give out your light, ... pour forth your beams mirrored from heaven. O daughter of Zion, “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee” (*Letter 38*, 1890).

2 (Malachi 2:7, 8). Only Light Can Dispel Darkness.—When Christ came into the world, darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people. The living oracles of God were fast becoming a dead letter. The still, small voice of God was heard only at times by the most devout worshiper; for it had become overpowered and silenced by the dogmas, maxims, and traditions of men. The long, intricate explanations of the priests made that which was the plainest and most simple, mysterious, indistinct, and uncertain. The clamors of rival sects confused the understanding, and their doctrines were widely apart from the correct theory of truth....

Truth looked down from heaven upon the children of men, but found no reflection of itself; for darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. If the darkness of error that hid the glory of God from the view of men was to be dispelled, the light of truth must shine amid the moral darkness of the world. It was decreed in the councils of God that the only-begotten Son of God must leave His high command in heaven, and clothe His divinity with humanity, and come to the world. No outward splendor must attend His steps, save that of virtue, mercy, goodness, and truth; for He was to represent to the world the attributes of God’s character; but the world, unaccustomed to gaze upon truth, turned from the light to the darkness of error; for error was more to their perverted taste than truth (*The Review and Herald*, August 6, 1895).

Chapter 61

1, 3. Guard Countenance, Words, Tone of Voice.—[Isaiah 61:1 quoted.] The Lord is not pleased to have His people a band of mourners. He wants them to repent of their sins, that they may enjoy the liberty of the sons of God. Then they will be filled with the praises of God, and will be a blessing to others. The Lord Jesus was anointed also “to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.”

“That He,” Christ Jesus, “might be glorified”—O that this might be the purpose of our lives! Then we should have regard even to the expression of our countenance, to our words, and even to the tone of our voice when we speak. All our business transactions would be wrought in faith and integrity. Then would the world be convinced that there is a people that are loyal to the God of heaven....

God calls for all to come into harmony with Himself. He will receive them if they will put away their evil actions. By a union with the divine nature of Christ, they may escape the corrupting influences of this world. It is time for every one of us to decide whose side we are on. The agencies of Satan will work with every mind that will allow itself to be worked by him. But there are also heavenly agencies waiting to communicate the bright rays of the glory of God to all that are willing to receive Him. It is truth that we want, precious truth in all its loveliness. Truth will bring liberty and gladness (MS 43, 1908).

Chapter 64

8. Let God Work the Clay.—While the human agent is devising and planning for himself something that God has withheld him from doing, he has a hard time. He complains and frets, and has still increased difficulties. But when he submits to be as clay in the hands of the potter, then God works the man into a vessel of honor. The clay submits to be worked. If God had His way, hundreds would be worked and made into vessels as He sees best.

Let the hand of God work the clay for His own service. He knows just what kind of vessel He wants. To every man He has given his work. God knows what place he is best fitted for. Many are working contrary to the will of God, and they spoil the web. The Lord wants every one to be submissive under His divine guidance. He will place men where they will submit to be worked into oneness with Christ, bearing His divine similitude. If self will submit to be worked, if you will cooperate with God, if you will pray in unity, work in unity, all taking your place as threads in the web of life, you will grow into a beautiful fabric that will rejoice the universe of God. (*Letter 63*, 1898).

The Potter cannot mold and fashion unto honor that which has never been placed in His hands. The Christian life is one of daily surrender, submission and continual overcoming. Every day fresh victories will be gained. Self must be lost sight of, and the love of God must be constantly cultivated. Thus we grow up into Christ. Thus the life is fashioned according to the divine model (MS 55, 1900).

Every child of God is to do his very best to uplift the standard of truth. He is to work in God’s order. If self is exalted, Christ is not magnified. In His Word God compares Himself to a potter, and His people to the clay. His work is to mold and fashion them after His own similitude. The lesson they are to learn is the lesson of submission. Self is not to be made prominent. If due attention is given to the divine instruction, if self is surrendered to the divine will, the hand of the Potter will produce a shapely vessel (*Letter 78*, 1901).

Chapter 65

- 2. See EGW on Jeremiah 17:25.
- 21-23. See EGW on Proverbs 31:27, Vol. III.
