

Joel: A Consecrated Messenger

MEMORY VERSE: “Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly” (Joel 2:15).

“The pillar of cloud which speaks wrath and terror to the transgressor of God’s law is light and mercy and deliverance to those who have kept His commandments.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 404.

Suggested Reading: *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, pp. 11–18. (At the bottom of this page)

1. APPLIED TO THE FUTURE

Sun, Jan 25

a. What catastrophe does the prophet Joel depict—how does it relate to an event still in the future? Joel 1:10–12, 17–20; Revelation 16:8, 9.

Joel 1:10–12

The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth. **11** Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen; howl, O ye vinedressers, for the wheat and for the barley; because the harvest of the field is perished. **12** The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men.

Joel 1:17–20

The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered. **18** How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. **19** O LORD, to thee will I cry: for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field.

20 The beasts of the field cry also unto thee: for the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.

Revelation 16:8, 9

And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. **9** And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.

“In the [fourth] plague . . . , power is given to the sun ‘to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat.’ Verses 8, 9. The prophets thus describe the condition of the earth at this fearful time: ‘The land mourneth; . . . because the harvest of the field is perished. . . . All the trees of the field are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men.’ ‘The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate. . . . How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture. . . . The rivers of water are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.’ ‘The songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord God: there shall be many dead bodies in every place; they shall cast them forth with silence.’ Joel 1:10–12, 17–20; Amos 8:3.

“These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off. Yet they will be the most awful scourges that have ever been known to mortals. All the judgments upon men, prior to the close of probation, have been mingled with mercy. The pleading blood of Christ has shielded the sinner from receiving the full measure of his guilt; but in the final judgment, wrath is poured out unmixed with mercy. In that day, multitudes will desire the shelter of God’s mercy which they have so long despised.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 628, 629.

2. FOCUSING RIGHT NOW

Mon, Jan 26

a. Of what do we need to be solemnly mindful? Joel 1:15, 16.

Joel 1:15, 16

Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come. **16** Is not the meat cut off before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God?

“The present is a time of overwhelming interest to all living. Rulers and statesmen, men who occupy positions of trust and authority, thinking men and women of all classes . . . recognize that something great and decisive is about to take place—that the world is on the verge of a stupendous crisis.

“Angels are now restraining the winds of strife, that they may not blow until the world shall be warned of its coming doom; but a storm is gathering, ready to burst upon the earth; and when God shall bid His angels loose the winds, there will be such a scene of strife as no pen can picture.

“The Bible, and the Bible only, gives a correct view of these things. Here are revealed the great final scenes in the history of our world, events that already are casting their shadows before, the sound of their approach causing the earth to tremble and men’s hearts to fail them for fear.”—*Education*, pp. 179, 180.

b. In light of the imminent danger, what prompt action are we as believers directed to undertake with fervor? Joel 1:14; 2:1, 2.

Joel 1:14

Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD your God, and cry unto the LORD,

Joel 2:1, 2

Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand; 2 A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations.

“In view of that great day the word of God, in the most solemn and impressive language, calls upon His people to arouse from their spiritual lethargy and to seek His face with repentance and humiliation.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 311.

c. How does Joel’s prophecy foreshadow the day of Christ’s second coming? Joel 2:3-6.

Joel 2:3-6

A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them. **4** The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run. **5** Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. **6** Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness.

“Soon our eyes were drawn to the east, for a small black cloud had appeared, about half as large as a man’s hand, which we all knew was the sign of the Son of man. . . . A rainbow was over the cloud, while around it were ten thousand angels, singing a most lovely song; and upon it sat the Son of man. His hair was white and curly and lay on His shoulders; and upon His head were many crowns. His feet had the appearance of fire; in His right hand was a sharp sickle; in His left, a silver trumpet. His eyes were as a flame of fire, which searched His children through and through. Then all faces gathered paleness, and those that God had rejected gathered blackness.”—Early Writings, pp. 15, 16.

3. CALLED TO REPENTANCE

Tue, Jan 27

a. What assurance does God give to those who repent with sincere hearts? Joel 2:12, 13; Psalm 34:18.

Joel 2:12, 13

Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: **13** And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

Psalm 34:18

The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

“The fasting which the word of God enjoins is something more than a form. It does not consist merely in refusing food, in wearing sackcloth, in sprinkling ashes upon the head. He who fasts in real sorrow for sin will never court display.

“The object of the fast which God calls upon us to keep is not to afflict the body for the sin of the soul, but to aid us in perceiving the grievous character of sin, in

humbling the heart before God and receiving His pardoning grace. His command to Israel was, ‘Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God.’ Joel 2:13.

“It will avail nothing for us to do penance or to flatter ourselves that by our own works we shall merit or purchase an inheritance among the saints. . . .

Repentance is turning from self to Christ; and when we receive Christ so that through faith He can live His life in us, good works will be manifest.”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 87.

**b. What is involved in the confession we so desperately need? Matthew 6:6;
1 John 1:9.**

Matthew 6:6

But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

“Confess your secret sins alone before your God. Acknowledge your heart wanderings to Him who knows perfectly how to treat your case. If you have wronged your neighbor, acknowledge to him your sin and show fruit of the same by making restitution. Then claim the blessing. Come to God just as you are, and let Him heal all your infirmities. Press your case to the throne of grace; let the work be thorough. Be sincere in dealing with God and your own soul. If you come to Him with a heart truly contrite, He will give you the victory. Then you may bear a sweet testimony of freedom, showing forth the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. He will not misapprehend or misjudge you. Your fellow men cannot absolve you from sin or cleanse you from iniquity. Jesus is the only one who can give you peace. He loved you and gave Himself for you. His great heart of love is ‘touched with the feeling of our infirmities?’ What sins are too great for Him to pardon? what soul too dark and sin-oppressed for Him to save? He is gracious, not looking for merit in us, but of His own boundless goodness healing our backslidings and loving us freely, while we are yet sinners.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 649.

a. Describe the urgent step God's church is to take. Joel 2:15-17.**Joel 2:15-17**

Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: **16** Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. **17** Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?

“Christ will be with every minister who, although he may not have attained to perfection of character, is seeking most earnestly to become Christlike. Such a minister will pray. He will weep between the porch and the altar, crying in soul anguish for the Lord's presence to be with him; else he cannot stand before the people, with all heaven looking upon him, and the angel's pen taking note of his words, his deportment, and his spirit.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 143.

“Could the curtain be rolled back, could you discern the purposes of God and the judgments that are about to fall upon a doomed world, could you see your own attitude, you would fear and tremble for your own souls and for the souls of your fellow men. Earnest prayers of heart-rending anguish would go up to heaven. You would weep between the porch and the altar, confessing your spiritual blindness and backsliding.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 408.

b. How does God desire to respond to such fervent prayers offered by His people? Joel 2:23.**Joel 2:23**

Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

“The enemy moves upon his servants to propose measures that would greatly impede the work of God; but statesmen who fear the Lord are influenced by holy angels to oppose such propositions with unanswerable arguments. Thus a few men will hold in check a powerful current of evil. The opposition of the

enemies of truth will be restrained that the third angel's message may do its work. When the final warning shall be given, it will arrest the attention of these leading men through whom the Lord is now working, and some of them will accept it, and will stand with the people of God through the time of trouble.

“The angel who unites in the proclamation of the third angel's message is to lighten the whole earth with his glory. A work of worldwide extent and unwonted power is here foretold. The advent movement of 1840–44 was a glorious manifestation of the power of God; the first angel's message was carried to every missionary station in the world, and in some countries there was the greatest religious interest which has been witnessed in any land since the Reformation of the sixteenth century; but these are to be exceeded by the mighty movement under the last warning of the third angel.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 610, 611.

5. A PEOPLE OF PEACE

Thu, Jan 29

a. Relate the fulfillment of the prophecies of Joel 2:28–32.

Joel 2:28–32

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: **29** And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. **30** And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. **31** The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. **32** And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

“I recommend to you, dear reader, the Word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. By that Word we are to be judged. God has, in that Word, promised to give visions in the ‘last days’; not for a new rule of faith, but for the comfort of His people, and to correct those who err from Bible truth.”—*Early Writings*, p. 78.

“May 19, 1780, stands in history as ‘The Dark Day.’ Since the time of Moses no period of darkness of equal density, extent, and duration, has ever been recorded. The description of this event, as given by eyewitnesses, is but an echo of the words of the Lord, recorded by the prophet Joel, twenty-five hundred years previous to their fulfillment. [Joel 2:31 quoted.]”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 308.

b. Despite hoping for peace, into what terrible fate will mankind finally be drawn? Joel 3:9, 10; 1 Thessalonians 5:3.

Joel 3:9, 10

Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: **10** Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong.

1 Thessalonians 5:3

For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

“The world is stirred with the spirit of war. The prophecy of the eleventh chapter of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfillment. Soon the scenes of trouble spoken of in the prophecies will take place.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 14.

c. Where will the faithful be at that time? Joel 3:16; Psalm 91:1-7.

Joel 3:16

The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.

Psalm 91:1-7

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. **2** I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. **3** Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. **4** He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. **5** Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; **6** Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. **7** A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.

“Fearful tests and trials await the people of God. The spirit of war is stirring the nations from one end of the earth to the other. But in the midst of the time of

trouble that is coming—a time of trouble such as has not been since there was a nation—God’s chosen people will stand unmoved. Satan and his host cannot destroy them, for angels that excel in strength will protect them.”—*Ibid.*, p. 17.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

Fri, Jan 30

1. What causes the catastrophic event foreseen in Joel 1:15–20?
2. What response will I have to the second coming of Christ?
3. How and why do we need to humble ourselves before the Lord?
4. Describe the blessing received by those who are truly consecrated to God at the end.
5. Now more than ever, why must we avoid incitement toward the spirit of war?

Suggested Reading: Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, pp. 11–18.

We are living in the time of the end. The fast-fulfilling signs of the times declare that the coming of Christ is near at hand. The days in which we live are solemn and important. The Spirit of God is gradually but surely being withdrawn from the earth. Plagues and judgments are already falling upon the despisers of the grace of God. The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude. (9T 11.1)

The agencies of evil are combining their forces and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones. (9T 11.2)

The condition of things in the world shows that troublous times are right upon us. The daily papers are full of indications of a terrible conflict in the near future. Bold robberies are of frequent occurrence. Strikes are common. Thefts and murders are committed on every hand. Men possessed of demons are taking the lives of men, women, and little children. Men have become infatuated with vice, and every species of evil prevails. (9T 11.3)

The enemy has succeeded in perverting justice and in filling men's hearts with the desire for selfish gain. "Justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter." Isaiah 59:14. In the great cities there are multitudes living in poverty and wretchedness, well-nigh destitute of food, shelter, and clothing; while in the same cities are those who have more than heart could wish, who live luxuriously, spending their money on richly furnished houses, on personal adornment, or worse still, upon the gratification of sensual appetites, upon liquor, tobacco, and other things that destroy the powers of the brain, unbalance the mind, and debase the soul. The cries of starving humanity are coming up before God, while by every species of oppression and extortion men are piling up colossal fortunes. (9T 11.4)

On one occasion, when in New York City, I was in the night season called upon to behold buildings rising story after story toward heaven. These buildings were warranted to be fireproof, and they were erected to glorify their owners and builders. Higher and still higher these buildings rose, and in them the most costly material was used. Those to whom these buildings belonged were not asking themselves: "How can we best glorify God?" The Lord was not in their thoughts. (9T 12.1)

I thought: "Oh, that those who are thus investing their means could see their course as God sees it! They are piling up magnificent buildings, but how foolish in the sight of the Ruler of the universe is their planning and devising. They are not studying with all the powers of heart and mind how they may glorify God. They have lost sight of this, the first duty of man." (9T 12.2)

As these lofty buildings went up, the owners rejoiced with ambitious pride that they had money to use in gratifying self and provoking the envy of their neighbors. Much of the money that they thus invested had been obtained through exaction, through grinding down the poor. They forgot that in heaven an account of every business transaction is kept; every unjust deal, every fraudulent act, is there recorded. The time is coming when in their fraud and insolence men will reach a point that the Lord will not permit them to pass, and they will learn that there is a limit to the forbearance of Jehovah. (9T 12.3)

The scene that next passed before me was an alarm of fire. Men looked at the lofty and supposedly fire-proof buildings and said: "They are perfectly safe." But these

buildings were consumed as if made of pitch. The fire engines could do nothing to stay the destruction. The firemen were unable to operate the engines. (9T 13.1)

I am instructed that when the Lord's time comes, should no change have taken place in the hearts of proud, ambitious human beings, men will find that the hand that had been strong to save will be strong to destroy. No earthly power can stay the hand of God. No material can be used in the erection of buildings that will preserve them from destruction when God's appointed time comes to send retribution on men for their disregard of His law and for their selfish ambition. (9T 13.2)

There are not many, even among educators and statesmen, who comprehend the causes that underlie the present state of society. Those who hold the reins of government are not able to solve the problem of moral corruption, poverty, pauperism, and increasing crime. They are struggling in vain to place business operations on a more secure basis. If men would give more heed to the teaching of God's word, they would find a solution of the problems that perplex them. (9T 13.3)

The Scriptures describe the condition of the world just before Christ's second coming. Of the men who by robbery and extortion are amassing great riches, it is written: "Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you." James 5:3-6. (9T 13.4)

But who reads the warnings given by the fast-fulfilling signs of the times? What impression is made upon worldlings? What change is seen in their attitude? No more than was seen in the attitude of the inhabitants of the Noachian world. Absorbed in worldly business and pleasure, the antediluvians "knew not until the Flood came, and took them all away." Matthew 24:39. They had heaven-sent warnings, but they refused to listen. And today the world, utterly regardless of the warning voice of God, is hurrying on to eternal ruin. (9T 14.1)

The world is stirred with the spirit of war. The prophecy of the eleventh chapter of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfillment. Soon the scenes of trouble spoken of in the prophecies will take place. (9T 14.2)

“Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.... Because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate.... The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth.” Isaiah 24:1-8. (9T 14.3)

“Alas for the day! for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.... The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down, for the corn is withered. How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate.” “The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men.” Joel 1:15-18, 12. (9T 15.1)

“I am pained at my very heart; ... I cannot hold my peace, because thou has heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war. Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled.” Jeremiah 4:19, 20. (9T 15.2)

“I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down.” Jeremiah 4:23-26. (9T 15.3)

“Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.” Jeremiah 30:7. (9T 15.4)

Not all in this world have taken sides with the enemy against God. Not all have become disloyal. There are a faithful few who are true to God; for John writes: “Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 14:12. Soon the battle will be waged fiercely between those who

serve God and those who serve Him not. Soon everything that can be shaken will be shaken, that those things that cannot be shaken may remain. (9T 15.5)

Satan is a diligent Bible student. He knows that his time is short, and he seeks at every point to counterwork the work of the Lord upon this earth. It is impossible to give any idea of the experience of the people of God who shall be alive upon the earth when celestial glory and a repetition of the persecutions of the past are blended. They will walk in the light proceeding from the throne of God. By means of the angels there will be constant communication between heaven and earth. And Satan, surrounded by evil angels, and claiming to be God, will work miracles of all kinds, to deceive, if possible, the very elect. God's people will not find their safety in working miracles, for Satan will counterfeit the miracles that will be wrought. God's tried and tested people will find their power in the sign spoken of in Exodus 31:12-18. They are to take their stand on the living word: "It is written." This is the only foundation upon which they can stand securely. Those who have broken their covenant with God will in that day be without God and without hope. (9T 16.1)

The worshipers of God will be especially distinguished by their regard for the fourth commandment, since this is the sign of God's creative power and the witness to His claim upon man's reverence and homage. The wicked will be distinguished by their efforts to tear down the Creator's memorial and to exalt the institution of Rome. In the issue of the conflict all Christendom will be divided into two great classes, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and those who worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark. Although church and state will unite their power to compel all, "both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond," to receive the mark of the beast, yet the people of God will not receive it. Revelation 13:16. The prophet of Patmos beholds "them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God," and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. Revelation 15:2. (9T 16.2)

Fearful tests and trials await the people of God. The spirit of war is stirring the nations from one end of the earth to the other. But in the midst of the time of trouble that is coming,—a time of trouble such as has not been since there was a nation,—God's chosen people will stand unmoved. Satan and his host cannot destroy them, for angels that excel in strength will protect them. (9T 17.1)

God's word to His people is: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, ... and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters." 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18. "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." 1 Peter 2:9. God's people are to be distinguished as a people who serve Him fully, wholeheartedly, taking no honor to themselves, and remembering that by a most solemn covenant they have bound themselves to serve the Lord and Him only. (9T 17.2)

"The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: everyone that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed." Exodus 31:12-17. (9T 17.3)

Do not these words point us out as God's denominated people? and do they not declare to us that so long as time shall last, we are to cherish the sacred, denominational distinction placed upon us? The children of Israel were to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations "for a perpetual covenant." The Sabbath has lost none of its meaning. It is still the sign between God and His people, and it will be so forever. (9T 18.1)