

# Introduction to Prophecy

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

“History and prophecy testify that the God of the whole earth revealeth secrets through His chosen light-bearers to the world.”—Bible Training School, December 1, 1912.

**Suggested Reading: The Great Controversy, pp. 593-602. (At the bottom of this page)**

AN INFINITE MIND

Sun, Mar 29

**a. What is God alone able to see? Isaiah 46:9, 10.**

**Isaiah 46:9, 10**

Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, **10** Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

“I AM means an eternal presence; the past, present, and future are alike to God. He sees the most remote events of past history, and the far distant future with as clear a vision as we do those things that are transpiring daily.”—The SDA Bible Commentary [E. G. White Comments], vol. 1, p. 1099.

**b. What does our Lord do with this knowledge? Daniel 2:20-22.**

**Daniel 2:20-22**

Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: **21** And he changeth the times and the seasons: he

removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: 22 He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.

“Above the distractions of the earth [God] sits enthroned; all things are open to His divine survey; and from His great and calm eternity He orders that which His providence sees best.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 417.

“In the annals of human history, the growth of nations, the rise and fall of empires, appear as if dependent on the will and prowess of man; the shaping of events seems, to a great degree, to be determined by his power, ambition, or caprice. But in the word of God the curtain is drawn aside, and we behold, above, behind, and through all the play and counterplay of human interest and power and passions, the agencies of the All-merciful One, silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will.”—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 499, 500.

## 2. SECRETS REVEALED

Mon, Mar 30

**a. What does God do when ready to work out His will on earth? Amos 3:7; Revelation 1:1.**

### **Amos 3:7**

Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.

### **Revelation 1:1**

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

“The Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets.’ While ‘the secret things belong unto the Lord our God,’ ‘those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever.’ Amos 3:7; Deuteronomy 29:29. God has given these things to us, and His blessing will attend the reverent, prayerful study of the prophetic scriptures.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 234.

**b. Why does God send us such messages? 1 John 3:1; John 1:12; Colossians 1:25-28.**

### **1 John 3:1**

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

### **John 1:12**

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

### **Colossians 1:25-28**

Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; **26** Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: **27** To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: **28** Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

“The Bible is a wonderful book. It is a history that opens up to us the past centuries. Without the Bible we would have been left to conjectures and fables in regard to the occurrences of past ages. It is a prophecy that unveils the future. It is the word of God unfolding to us the plan of salvation, pointing out the way by which we may escape eternal death and gain eternal life. Of all the books that flood the world, however valuable, the Bible is the Book of books, most deserving of our study and admiration. It gives not only the history of this world but a description of the world to come. It contains instruction concerning the wonders of the universe, it reveals to our understanding the character of the Author of the heavens and the earth. In it is the revelation of God to man.”—*The Signs of the Times*, January 30, 1893.

**c. What is the most important knowledge for us to seek? Jeremiah 9:23, 24; John 17:3; Ephesians 3:17-19.**

### **Jeremiah 9:23, 24**

Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: **24** But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

### John 17:3

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

### Ephesians 3:17-19

That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, **18** May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; **19** And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

“In the word of God the mind finds subject for the deepest thought, the loftiest aspiration. Here we may hold communion with patriarchs and prophets, and listen to the voice of the Eternal as He speaks with men. Here we behold the Majesty of heaven as He humbled Himself to become our substitute and surety to cope singlehanded with the powers of darkness and to gain the victory in our behalf. A reverent contemplation of such themes as these cannot fail to soften, purify, and ennoble the heart, and, at the same time, to inspire the mind with new strength and vigor.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 25.

## 3. UNDERSTANDING THE WORD

Tue, Mar 31

### **a. What assistance do we need to understand Scripture, including prophecy? John 16:7-13.**

#### John 16:7-13

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. **8** And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: **9** Of sin, because they believe not on me; **10** Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; **11** Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. **12** I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. **13** Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

“God intends that, even in this life, truth shall be ever unfolding to His people. There is only one way in which this knowledge can be obtained. We

can attain to an understanding of God's word only through the illumination of that Spirit by which the word was given."—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 703.

“Never should the Bible be studied without prayer. Before opening its pages we should ask for the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, and it will be given. When Nathanael came to Jesus, the Saviour exclaimed, ‘Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!’ Nathanael said, ‘Whence knowest Thou me?’ Jesus answered, ‘Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.’ John 1:47, 48. And Jesus will see us also in the secret places of prayer if we will seek Him for light that we may know what is truth. Angels from the world of light will be with those who in humility of heart seek for divine guidance.”—Steps to Christ, p. 91.

**b. Why is it important not to simply follow our own opinions when studying prophecy? 2 Peter 1:19-21.**

**2 Peter 1:19-21**

We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: **20** Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. **21** For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

“In your study of the word, lay at the door of investigation your preconceived opinions and your hereditary and cultivated ideas. You will never reach the truth if you study the Scriptures to vindicate your own ideas. Leave these at the door, and with a contrite heart go in to hear what the Lord has to say to you. As the humble seeker for truth sits at Christ's feet, and learns of Him, the word gives him understanding. To those who are too wise in their own conceit to study the Bible, Christ says, You must become meek and lowly in heart if you desire to become wise unto salvation.

Do not read the word in the light of former opinions; but, with a mind free from prejudice, search it carefully and prayerfully. If, as you read, conviction comes, and you see that your cherished opinions are not in harmony with the word, do not try to make the word fit these opinions. Make your opinions fit the word. Do not allow what you have believed or practiced in the past to control your understanding. Open the eyes of your mind to

behold wondrous things out of the law. Find out what is written, and then plant your feet on the eternal Rock.”—Messages to Young People, p. 260.

**a. How does God impart His word, and how should we study it? Isaiah 28:9, 10.**

**Isaiah 28:9, 10**

Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. **10** For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:

“The evidence of the truth of God’s word is in the word itself. Scripture is the key that unlocks scripture. The deep meaning of the truths of God’s word is unfolded to our minds by His Spirit.”—Testimonies for the Church, vol, 8, p. 157.

“No one with a spirit to appreciate its teaching can read a single passage from the Bible without gaining from it some helpful thought. But the most valuable teaching of the Bible is not to be gained by occasional or disconnected study. Its great system of truth is not so presented as to be discerned by the hasty or careless reader. Many of its treasures lie far beneath the surface, and can be obtained only by diligent research and continuous effort. The truths that go to make up the great whole must be searched out and gathered up, ‘here a little, and there a little.’ Isaiah 28:10. “When thus searched out and brought together, they will be found to be perfectly fitted to one another. Each Gospel is a supplement to the others, every prophecy an explanation of another, every truth a development of some other truth. The types of the Jewish economy are made plain by the gospel. Every principle in the word of God has its place, every fact its bearing. And the complete structure, in design and execution, bears testimony to its Author. Such a structure no mind but that of the Infinite could conceive or fashion.”—Education, pp. 123, 124.

**b. Why is every passage of the Bible important? Matthew 4:4, Luke 24:27.**

**Matthew 4:4**

But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

## Luke 24:27

And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

“We should not take the testimony of any man as to what the Scriptures teach, but should study the words of God for ourselves. . . . The mind will enlarge if it is employed in tracing out the relation of the subjects of the Bible, comparing scripture with scripture and spiritual things with spiritual. . . .

“We cannot obtain wisdom without earnest attention and prayerful study. Some portions of Scripture are indeed too plain to be misunderstood, but there are others whose meaning does not lie on the surface to be seen at a glance. Scripture must be compared with scripture. There must be careful research and prayerful reflection. And such study will be richly repaid. As the miner discovers veins of precious metal concealed beneath the surface of the earth, so will he who perseveringly searches the word of God as for hid treasure find truths of the greatest value, which are concealed from the view of the careless seeker. The words of inspiration, pondered in the heart, will be as streams flowing from the fountain of life.”—Steps to Christ, pp. 89–91.

## 5. STUDYING WITH WISDOM

Thur, Apr 2

**a. How do our attitude and our choices affect our ability to discern the meaning of the prophecies? Daniel 12:10; 2 Timothy 3:1-8.**

### Daniel 12:10

Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.

### 2 Timothy 3:1-8

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. **2** For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, **3** Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, **4** Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; **5** Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. **6** For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, **7** Ever

learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. 8 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

“The spirit in which you come to the investigation of the Scriptures will determine the character of the assistant at your side. Angels from the world of light will be with those who in humility of heart seek for divine guidance. But if the Bible is opened with irreverence, with a feeling of self-sufficiency, if the heart is filled with prejudice, Satan is beside you, and he will set the plain statements of God’s word in a perverted light.”—

Testimonies to Ministers, p. 108.

“Satan has led many to believe that the prophetic portions of the writings of Daniel and of John the revelator cannot be understood. But the promise is plain that special blessing will accompany the study of these prophecies.”—Prophets and Kings, p. 547.

**b. Explain the importance of a personal application of truth. Revelation 22:7; Matthew 7:24-27; John 7:17.**

**Revelation 22:7**

Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

**Matthew 7:24-27**

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: 25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

**John 7:17**

If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

“The meek are guided by the Lord, because they are teachable, willing to be instructed. They have a sincere desire to know and to do the will of God. The Saviour’s promise is, ‘If any man will do His will, he shall know of the

doctrine.’ John 7:17. And He declares by the apostle James, ‘If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.’ James 1:5. But His promise is only to those who are willing to follow the Lord wholly.”—Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 384.

“If you would know the mystery of godliness, you must follow the plain word of truth—feeling or no feeling, emotion or no emotion. Obedience must be rendered from a sense of principle, and the right must be pursued under all circumstances.”—Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 125.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

Fri, Apr 3

- 1. In terms of knowledge, how does God distinguish Himself from all other beings?**
- 2. What does God reveal to us in the writings of the prophets, and why?**
- 3. When we open the Word of God, for what assistance should we pray?**
- 4. What kind of effort should I be willing to invest in the study of the Bible?**
- 5. Am I willing to apply what I discover in God’s Word?**



**Suggested Reading: The Great Controversy, pp. 593–602.**

“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Isaiah 8:20. The people of God are directed to the Scriptures as their safeguard against the influence of false teachers and the delusive power of spirits of darkness. Satan employs every possible device to prevent men from obtaining a knowledge of the Bible; for its plain utterances reveal his deceptions. At every revival of God’s work the prince of evil is aroused to more intense activity; he is now putting forth his utmost efforts for a final struggle against Christ and His followers. The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvelous works in our sight. So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures. By their testimony every statement and every miracle must be tested. **(GC 593.1)**

Those who endeavor to obey all the commandments of God will be opposed and derided. They can stand only in God. In order to endure the trial before them, they must understand the will of God as revealed in His word; they can honor Him only as they have a right conception of His character,

government, and purposes, and act in accordance with them. None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict. To every soul will come the searching test: "Shall I obey God rather than men?" The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the rock of God's immutable word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defense of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus? **(GC 593.2)**

Before His crucifixion the Saviour explained to His disciples that He was to be put to death and to rise again from the tomb, and angels were present to impress His words on minds and hearts. But the disciples were looking for temporal deliverance from the Roman yoke, and they could not tolerate the thought that He in whom all their hopes centered should suffer an ignominious death. The words which they needed to remember were banished from their minds; and when the time of trial came, it found them unprepared. The death of Jesus as fully destroyed their hopes as if He had not forewarned them. So in the prophecies the future is opened before us as plainly as it was opened to the disciples by the words of Christ. The events connected with the close of probation and the work of preparation for the time of trouble, are clearly presented. But multitudes have no more understanding of these important truths than if they had never been revealed. Satan watches to catch away every impression that would make them wise unto salvation, and the time of trouble will find them unready. **(GC 594.1)**

When God sends to men warnings so important that they are represented as proclaimed by holy angels flying in the midst of heaven, He requires every person endowed with reasoning powers to heed the message. The fearful judgments denounced against the worship of the beast and his image (Revelation 14:9-11), should lead all to a diligent study of the prophecies to learn what the mark of the beast is, and how they are to avoid receiving it. But the masses of the people turn away their ears from hearing the truth and are turned unto fables. The apostle Paul declared, looking down to the last days: "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." 2 Timothy 4:3. That time has fully come. The multitudes do not want Bible truth, because it interferes with the desires of the sinful, world-loving heart; and Satan supplies the deceptions which they love. **(GC 594.2)**

But God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms. The

opinions of learned men, the deductions of science, the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils, as numerous and discordant as are the churches which they represent, the voice of the majority—not one nor all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith. Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain “Thus saith the Lord” in its support. **(GC 595.1)**

Satan is constantly endeavoring to attract attention to man in the place of God. He leads the people to look to bishops, to pastors, to professors of theology, as their guides, instead of searching the Scriptures to learn their duty for themselves. Then, by controlling the minds of these leaders, he can influence the multitudes according to his will. **(GC 595.2)**

When Christ came to speak the words of life, the common people heard Him gladly; and many, even of the priests and rulers, believed on Him. But the chief of the priesthood and the leading men of the nation were determined to condemn and repudiate His teachings. Though they were baffled in all their efforts to find accusations against Him, though they could not but feel the influence of the divine power and wisdom attending His words, yet they incased themselves in prejudice; they rejected the clearest evidence of His Messiahship, lest they should be forced to become His disciples. These opponents of Jesus were men whom the people had been taught from infancy to reverence, to whose authority they had been accustomed implicitly to bow. “How is it,” they asked, “that our rulers and learned scribes do not believe on Jesus? Would not these pious men receive Him if He were the Christ?” It was the influence of such teachers that led the Jewish nation to reject their Redeemer. **(GC 595.3)**

The spirit which actuated those priests and rulers is still manifested by many who make a high profession of piety. They refuse to examine the testimony of the Scriptures concerning the special truths for this time. They point to their own numbers, wealth, and popularity, and look with contempt upon the advocates of truth as few, poor, and unpopular, having a faith that separates them from the world. **(GC 596.1)**

Christ foresaw that the undue assumption of authority indulged by the scribes and Pharisees would not cease with the dispersion of the Jews. He had a prophetic view of the work of exalting human authority to rule the conscience, which has been so terrible a curse to the church in all ages. And His fearful denunciations of the scribes and Pharisees, and His warnings to

the people not to follow these blind leaders, were placed on record as an admonition to future generations. **(GC 596.2)**

The Roman Church reserves to the clergy the right to interpret the Scriptures. On the ground that ecclesiastics alone are competent to explain God's word, it is withheld from the common people. [See Appendix note for page 340.] Though the Reformation gave the Scriptures to all, yet the selfsame principle which was maintained by Rome prevents multitudes in Protestant churches from searching the Bible for themselves. They are taught to accept its teachings as interpreted by the church; and there are thousands who dare receive nothing, however plainly revealed in Scripture, that is contrary to their creed or the established teaching of their church. **(GC 596.3)**

Notwithstanding the Bible is full of warnings against false teachers, many are ready thus to commit the keeping of their souls to the clergy. There are today thousands of professors of religion who can give no other reason for points of faith which they hold than that they were so instructed by their religious leaders. They pass by the Saviour's teachings almost unnoticed, and place implicit confidence in the words of the ministers. But are ministers infallible? How can we trust our souls to their guidance unless we know from God's word that they are light bearers? A lack of moral courage to step aside from the beaten track of the world leads many to follow in the steps of learned men; and by their reluctance to investigate for themselves, they are becoming hopelessly fastened in the chains of error. They see that the truth for this time is plainly brought to view in the Bible; and they feel the power of the Holy Spirit attending its proclamation; yet they allow the opposition of the clergy to turn them from the light. Though reason and conscience are convinced, these deluded souls dare not think differently from the minister; and their individual judgment, their eternal interests, are sacrificed to the unbelief, the pride and prejudice, of another. **(GC 596.4)**

Many are the ways by which Satan works through human influence to bind his captives. He secures multitudes to himself by attaching them by the silken cords of affection to those who are enemies of the cross of Christ. Whatever this attachment may be, parental, filial, conjugal, or social, the effect is the same; the opposers of truth exert their power to control the conscience, and the souls held under their sway have not sufficient courage or independence to obey their own convictions of duty. **(GC 597.1)**

The truth and the glory of God are inseparable; it is impossible for us, with the Bible within our reach, to honor God by erroneous opinions. Many claim that it matters not what one believes, if his life is only right. But the life is molded by the faith. If light and truth is within our reach, and we neglect to improve the privilege of hearing and seeing it, we virtually reject it; we are choosing darkness rather than light. **(GC 597.2)**

“There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” Proverbs 16:25. Ignorance is no excuse for error or sin, when there is every opportunity to know the will of God. A man is traveling and comes to a place where there are several roads and a guideboard indicating where each one leads. If he disregards the guideboard, and takes whichever road seems to him to be right, he may be ever so sincere, but will in all probability find himself on the wrong road. **(GC 597.3)**

God has given us His word that we may become acquainted with its teachings and know for ourselves what He requires of us. When the lawyer came to Jesus with the inquiry, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” (Luke 18:18) the Saviour referred him to the Scriptures, saying: “What is written in the law? how readest thou?” (Luke 10:26) Ignorance will not excuse young or old, nor release them from the punishment due for the transgression of God’s law; because there is in their hands a faithful presentation of that law and of its principles and claims. It is not enough to have good intentions; it is not enough to do what a man thinks is right or what the minister tells him is right. His soul’s salvation is at stake, and he should search the Scriptures for himself. However strong may be his convictions, however confident he may be that the minister knows what is truth, this is not his foundation. He has a chart pointing out every waymark on the heavenward journey, and he ought not to guess at anything. **(GC 598.1)**

It is the first and highest duty of every rational being to learn from the Scriptures what is truth, and then to walk in the light and encourage others to follow his example. We should day by day study the Bible diligently, weighing every thought and comparing scripture with scripture. With divine help we are to form our opinions for ourselves as we are to answer for ourselves before God. **(GC 598.2)**

The truths most plainly revealed in the Bible have been involved in doubt and darkness by learned men, who, with a pretense of great wisdom, teach that the Scriptures have a mystical, a secret, spiritual meaning not apparent

in the language employed. These men are false teachers. It was to such a class that Jesus declared: "Ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God." Mark 12:24. The language of the Bible should be explained according to its obvious meaning, unless a symbol or figure is employed. Christ has given the promise: "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." John 7:17. If men would but take the Bible as it reads, if there were no false teachers to mislead and confuse their minds, a work would be accomplished that would make angels glad and that would bring into the fold of Christ thousands upon thousands who are now wandering in error. **(GC 598.3)**

We should exert all the powers of the mind in the study of the Scriptures and should task the understanding to comprehend, as far as mortals can, the deep things of God; yet we must not forget that the docility and submission of a child is the true spirit of the learner. Scriptural difficulties can never be mastered by the same methods that are employed in grappling with philosophical problems. We should not engage in the study of the Bible with that self-reliance with which so many enter the domains of science, but with a prayerful dependence upon God and a sincere desire to learn His will. We must come with a humble and teachable spirit to obtain knowledge from the great I AM. Otherwise, evil angels will so blind our minds and harden our hearts that we shall not be impressed by the truth. **(GC 599.1)**

Many a portion of Scripture which learned men pronounce a mystery, or pass over as unimportant, is full of comfort and instruction to him who has been taught in the school of Christ. One reason why many theologians have no clearer understanding of God's word is, they close their eyes to truths which they do not wish to practice. An understanding of Bible truth depends not so much on the power of intellect brought to the search as on the singleness of purpose, the earnest longing after righteousness. **(GC 599.2)**

The Bible should never be studied without prayer. The Holy Spirit alone can cause us to feel the importance of those things easy to be understood, or prevent us from wresting truths difficult of comprehension. It is the office of heavenly angels to prepare the heart so to comprehend God's word that we shall be charmed with its beauty, admonished by its warnings, or animated and strengthened by its promises. We should make the psalmist's petition our own: "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law." Psalm 119:18. Temptations often appear irresistible because, through neglect of prayer and the study of the Bible, the tempted one cannot readily remember God's promises and meet Satan with the Scripture

weapons. But angels are round about those who are willing to be taught in divine things; and in the time of great necessity they will bring to their remembrance the very truths which are needed. Thus “when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.” Isaiah 59:19. **(GC 599.3)**

Jesus promised His disciples: “The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” John 14:26. But the teachings of Christ must previously have been stored in the mind in order for the Spirit of God to bring them to our remembrance in the time of peril. “Thy word have I hid in mine heart,” said David, “that I might not sin against Thee.” Psalm 119:11. **(GC 600.1)**

All who value their eternal interests should be on their guard against the inroads of skepticism. The very pillars of truth will be assailed. It is impossible to keep beyond the reach of the sarcasms and sophisms, the insidious and pestilent teachings, of modern infidelity. Satan adapts his temptations to all classes. He assails the illiterate with a jest or sneer, while he meets the educated with scientific objections and philosophical reasoning, alike calculated to excite distrust or contempt of the Scriptures. Even youth of little experience presume to insinuate doubts concerning the fundamental principles of Christianity. And this youthful infidelity, shallow as it is, has its influence. Many are thus led to jest at the faith of their fathers and to do despite to the Spirit of grace. Hebrews 10:29. Many a life that promised to be an honor to God and a blessing to the world has been blighted by the foul breath of infidelity. All who trust to the boastful decisions of human reason and imagine that they can explain divine mysteries and arrive at truth unaided by the wisdom of God are entangled in the snare of Satan. **(GC 600.2)**

We are living in the most solemn period of this world’s history. The destiny of earth’s teeming multitudes is about to be decided. Our own future well-being and also the salvation of other souls depend upon the course which we now pursue. We need to be guided by the Spirit of truth. Every follower of Christ should earnestly inquire: “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?” We need to humble ourselves before the Lord, with fasting and prayer, and to meditate much upon His word, especially upon the scenes of the judgment. We should now seek a deep and living experience in the things of God. We have not a moment to lose. Events of vital importance are taking place

around us; we are on Satan's enchanted ground. Sleep not, sentinels of God; the foe is lurking near, ready at any moment, should you become lax and drowsy, to spring upon you and make you his prey. **(GC 601.1)**

Many are deceived as to their true condition before God. They congratulate themselves upon the wrong acts which they do not commit, and forget to enumerate the good and noble deeds which God requires of them, but which they have neglected to perform. It is not enough that they are trees in the garden of God. They are to answer His expectation by bearing fruit. He holds them accountable for their failure to accomplish all the good which they could have done, through His grace strengthening them. In the books of heaven they are registered as cumberers of the ground. Yet the case of even this class is not utterly hopeless. With those who have slighted God's mercy and abused His grace, the heart of long-suffering love yet pleads. "Wherefore He saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, ... redeeming the time, because the days are evil." Ephesians 5:14-16. **(GC 601.2)**

When the testing time shall come, those who have made God's word their rule of life will be revealed. In summer there is no noticeable difference between evergreens and other trees; but when the blasts of winter come, the evergreens remain unchanged, while other trees are stripped of their foliage. So the falsehearted professor may not now be distinguished from the real Christian, but the time is just upon us when the difference will be apparent. Let opposition arise, let bigotry and intolerance again bear sway, let persecution be kindled, and the halfhearted and hypocritical will waver and yield the faith; but the true Christian will stand firm as a rock, his faith stronger, his hope brighter, than in days of prosperity. **(GC 602.1)**

Says the psalmist: "Thy testimonies are my meditation." "Through Thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way." Psalm 119:99, 104. **(GC 602.2)**

"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom." "He shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." Proverbs 3:13; Jeremiah 17:8. **(GC 602.3)**