

“I Make All Things New”



SABBATH AFTERNOON

Read for This Week’s Study: *Rev. 19:6–9, John 14:1–3, Rev. 19:11–16, Rev. 20:1–3, Jer. 4:23–26, Rev. 20:4–6, Rev. 21:2–8.*

Memory Text: “Then He who sat on the throne said, ‘Behold, I make all things new.’ And He said to me, ‘Write, for these words are true and faithful’ ” (*Revelation 21:5, NKJV*).

The destruction of end-time Babylon is bad news for those who collaborated with this apostate religious system. For God’s people, however, it is good news (*Rev. 19:1–7*). Babylon was responsible for inducing the secular political powers to persecute and harm them (*Rev. 18:24*). The destruction of this great adversary means deliverance and salvation for God’s faithful people.

With the destruction of Babylon, the prayer of God’s people in the scene of the fifth seal is ultimately answered. Their cry, “How long, O Lord?” (*Rev. 6:10*) represents the cry of God’s oppressed and suffering people from Abel to the time when God will finally vindicate them (*Ps. 79:5; Hab. 1:2; Dan. 12:6, 7*). The book of Revelation assures God’s people that evil, oppression, and suffering will come to an end.

It is now time for Christ to usher in His everlasting kingdom. The remaining chapters of Revelation describe not just the destruction of end-time Babylon but also the destruction of Satan and all evil. We get glimpses, too, of the establishment of God’s everlasting kingdom.

* Study this week’s lesson to prepare for Sabbath, March 30.

The Wedding Supper of the Lamb

Read Revelation 19:6–9 along with John 14:1–3. How does a wedding supper appropriately illustrate the long-awaited union between Christ and His people?

Two thousand years ago, Christ left His heavenly home to invite His followers to a wedding supper (*Matt. 22:1–14*) that will take place after His marriage to His bride. “The marriage represents the reception by Christ of His kingdom. The Holy City, the New Jerusalem, . . . is called ‘the bride, the Lamb’s wife.’ . . . In the Revelation the people of God are said to be the guests at the marriage supper. Revelation 19:9. If *guests*, they cannot be represented also as the *bride*. . . .

“In the parable of Matthew 22 the same figure of the marriage is introduced, and the investigative judgment is clearly represented as taking place before the marriage. Previous to the wedding the king comes in to see the guests, to see if all are attired in the wedding garment, the spotless robe of character washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. Matthew 22:11; Revelation 7:14.”—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 426–428. After His death and resurrection, the Bridegroom returned to His Father’s house to “prepare a place” for His people, His wedding guests (*see John 14:1–3*). They remain on earth preparing for His return. At the end of the world, He will come back and take them to His Father’s house.

Revelation 19:8 states that the fine and clean linen was given to the bride by Christ. This apparel shows that the wedding guests who enter the city do not claim any merit for their deeds. Thus, the “fine linen, clean and bright” represents “the righteous acts of the saints” (*NKJV*), acts that came as a result of their union with Christ, who lives in them. Thus, these robes symbolize His righteousness and that His people “keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (*Rev. 14:12*). While on earth, Jesus told a parable about a wedding. However, one of the guests preferred to wear his own attire instead of the wedding garment provided by the king, and he was expelled from the wedding (*Matt. 22:1–14*).

Revelation 3:18 shows that the robe of Christ’s righteousness, the gold of faith and love, and the eye salve of the Holy Spirit are the greatest needs of God’s people living at the time of the end. Jesus’ offer that the Laodiceans “buy” these gifts from Him shows us that He asks for something in exchange for what He offers us. We give up self-sufficiency and trust in ourselves in exchange for a life of faithful obedience to Christ and trust in Him as our only hope of salvation.

We are not saved by our works, but what “righteous acts” do you do that define the life that you are living?

Armageddon Ends

Read Revelation 19:11–16. What is the name of the rider of the white horse, and what does it mean that a sharp sword comes from His mouth? What does this tell us about how to be on the winning side in the end?

What we see here is a depiction of Christ's second coming, the fulfillment of the promise that believers in all ages have been longing for. Like Jesus, His people have based their faith on God's Word. Revelation 19:11–16 is the culmination of Jesus' many victories: Jesus defeated Satan in heaven; He defeated Satan in the wilderness; He defeated him at the cross; and He will defeat him at His return.

“Soon there appears in the east a small black cloud, about half the size of a man's hand. It is the cloud which surrounds the Saviour and which seems in the distance to be shrouded in darkness. The people of God know this to be the sign of the Son of man. In solemn silence they gaze upon it as it draws nearer the earth, becoming lighter and more glorious, until it is a great white cloud, its base a glory like consuming fire, and above it the rainbow of the covenant. Jesus rides forth as a mighty conqueror. Not now a ‘Man of Sorrows,’ to drink the bitter cup of shame and woe, He comes, victor in heaven and earth, to judge the living and the dead. ‘Faithful and True,’ ‘in righteousness He doth judge and make war.’ And ‘the armies which were in heaven’ (Revelation 19:11, 14) follow Him. With anthems of celestial melody the holy angels, a vast, unnumbered throng, attend Him on His way. The firmament seems filled with radiant forms—‘ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.’ No human pen can portray the scene; no mortal mind is adequate to conceive its splendor.”—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 640, 641.

In 2 Thessalonians 1:8–10, Paul gives another depiction of the ultimate victory of Christ at the Second Coming, when all the secular and religious powers, which had conspired against Him, are destroyed, and His people are delivered for all eternity.

Revelation 19 describes two suppers, one in verse 9 and another in verses 17 and 18. At one supper you eat, at the other you get eaten. It's hard to imagine a starker contrast of what's at stake in the whole great controversy for every human being. What should this imagery teach us about how seriously we need to take our faith and the mission that our faith calls us to participate in?

The Millennium

Read Revelation 20:1–3 along with Jeremiah 4:23–26. During the millennium, what is the state of the earth? In what way is Satan bound by chains?

The 1,000 years (or millennium) begin with the second coming of Christ. At this time, Satan and his fallen angels are chained. The chaining of Satan is symbolic, because spiritual beings cannot be physically bound. Satan is bound by circumstances. The plagues have desolated the earth and killed off its evil inhabitants, bringing it into a chaotic condition resembling the earth before Creation (*Gen. 1:2*). In such a state, the earth functions as Satan's prison during the millennium. Because there are no human beings to tempt and harm, all that Satan and his demonic associates can do is contemplate the consequences of their rebellion against God.

Read Revelation 20:4–6. Where are the redeemed during the millennium?

Revelation shows that God's people will spend the millennium in the heavenly places that Christ prepared for them (*see John 14:1–3*). John sees them sitting on thrones as kings and priests, judging the world. Jesus promised the disciples that they would “ ‘sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel’ ” (*Matt. 19:28*). Paul stated that the saints would judge the world (*1 Cor. 6:2, 3*).

This judgment concerns the fairness of God's actions. Throughout history Satan has raised doubts concerning God's character and His dealings with the beings He created. During the millennium, God allows the redeemed to access the records of history in order to find answers to all questions concerning the fairness of His decisions regarding those who were lost, as well as questions dealing with His leading in their own lives. At the conclusion of the millennium, all questions regarding God's justice are forever settled. God's people are able to see beyond a shadow of doubt that Satan's accusations were unfounded. They are now ready to witness the administration of God's justice at the final judgment of the lost.

Who among us doesn't have questions, hard questions, that for now seem to have no answers? What does it tell us about the character of God that, one day, He will give us the answers?

“A New Heaven and a New Earth”

After the eradication of sin, the earth will be transformed into the home of the redeemed. What will it be like?

In Revelation 21:1, John saw “a new heaven and a new earth.” The Bible refers to three heavens: the sky, the starry universe, and the place where God dwells (*see 2 Cor. 12:2*). In Revelation 21:1, the earth’s atmosphere is in view. The contaminated earth and the sky cannot endure God’s presence (*Rev. 20:11*). The word “new” in Greek (*kainos*) refers to something new in quality, not in origin and time. This planet will be purged by fire and restored to its original state (*2 Pet. 3:10–13*).

Particularly interesting is the fact that the first thing John observes on the new earth is that there is no sea. John’s reference to “*the sea*” (with the definite article) shows that he probably had in mind the sea that surrounded him on Patmos, which had become a symbol of separation and suffering. For him, the absence of that sea on the new earth meant absence from the pain caused by his separation from those whom he loved.

Read Revelation 21:2–8 and Revelation 7:15–17. What parallels exist in the description of the new earth and the Garden of Eden, in Genesis 2?

A life free of suffering and death on the restored earth is guaranteed by God’s presence among His people. His presence is manifested in the New Jerusalem and “the tabernacle of God” (*Rev. 21:3*), where God will dwell among His people. The presence of God makes life truly a paradise in the restored earth.

God’s presence guarantees freedom from suffering: no death, sorrow, crying, or pain, which are all the consequences of sin. With the eradication of sin, “the former things have passed away” (*Rev. 21:4, NKJV*).

This idea was well articulated by Mary and Martha at the death of their brother Lazarus: “‘Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died’” (*John 11:21, NKJV*). The sisters knew that death could not exist in the presence of Christ. In the same way, the abiding presence of God on the new earth will secure freedom from the pain and suffering that we now experience in this life. This freedom is the great hope that is promised to us in Christ, a hope sealed in His blood.

Why is this promise of a new existence in a new world so central to all that we believe? What good would our faith be without it?

The New Jerusalem

John now describes the capital of the new earth, the New Jerusalem. While a real place inhabited by real people, the New Jerusalem and life in it are beyond any earthly description (*see 1 Cor. 2:9*).

Read Revelation 21:9–21. What are the exterior features of the New Jerusalem?

The New Jerusalem is referred to as the bride, the Lamb's wife. The New Jerusalem is the place that Christ is preparing for His people (*John 14:1–3*).

The city is surrounded by a high wall with twelve gates—three gates on each of the four sides, allowing entry from any direction. This feature points to the universal scope of the city. In the New Jerusalem everybody has unlimited access to God's presence.

The city is further pictured as a perfect cube; it is 12,000 furlongs, or stadia, in length, width, and height. The cube consists of 12 edges. Thus, the city totals 144,000 stadia, which reflects the 144,000 who are translated without seeing death at the second coming of Jesus. In the Old Testament temple, the Most Holy Place was a perfect cube (*1 Kings 6:20*). The New Jerusalem thus functions as the center of the worship of God.

Read Revelation 21:21–22:5. What interior features of the city remind you of the Garden of Eden? What is the significance of the promise that there will be no more curse in the city (*Rev. 22:3*)?

The most prominent feature of the New Jerusalem is the river of water of life flowing from God's throne (*see Gen. 2:10*). In contrast to the river in Babylon, at which God's people were sitting as captives longing for Jerusalem (*Psalms 137*), on the banks of the river of life in the New Jerusalem, God's wandering people of all ages have found their home.

On both sides of the river is the tree of life with leaves for "the healing of the nations" (*Rev. 22:2*). This healing does not refer to disease, as on the new earth there will be no disease. It refers to the healing of all the wounds caused by the barriers that have torn people apart throughout history. The redeemed of all ages and from all nations now belong to one family of God.

Further Thought: Read Ellen G. White, “Without a Wedding Garment,” pp. 307–319, in *Christ’s Object Lessons*; “The Controversy Ended,” pp. 662–678, in *The Great Controversy*.

The book of Revelation concludes with what was introduced at the beginning: the second coming of Christ in power and glory and the establishment of God’s everlasting kingdom. The return of Christ, when He finally will be united with His bride, is the climactic point in the book.

However, the book does not put these events in an unrealistic context. That Jesus is coming soon is the first reality. The second reality is that we are still here waiting for His return. While waiting, we must have a clear comprehension of the messages of Revelation, and we can get this understanding by reading the book again and again until the end of all things comes. The messages of the book of Revelation constantly remind us, while we wait, not to look to the things of the world, but to fix our eyes on heaven and on Him who is our only hope. The Christ of Revelation is the answer to all human hopes and longings amid the enigmas and uncertainties of life. He holds the future of this world and our future in His hands.

The book also reminds us that before the end comes, we are entrusted with the task of proclaiming the message of His soon return to all the world. Our waiting for His return is not passive, but active. Both the Spirit and the Bride call: “‘Come!’” (*Rev. 22:17, NKJV*). We must join that call. It is the good news, and as such, it must be proclaimed to the people of the world.

Discussion Questions:

- 1 Think about the millennium and the judgment of the unrighteous dead that occurs only *after* the millennium. The saved will have a thousand years to get all their questions answered. Only then will God bring final punishment upon the lost. What does this truth reveal to us about God?
- 2 Revelation 1:3 promises blessings to those who listen, read, heed, and keep the words of the prophecies of Revelation. As we conclude our study of this book, what are the things you have discovered that you need to heed and keep?

Exposed to HIV—Twice

By ANDREW McCHESNEY, Adventist Mission

Maria Lemos Abel, a Seventh-day Adventist nurse, asked a mother to hold her two-year-old daughter firmly for an injection of penicillin G procaine to treat a bacterial infection. But the mother didn't heed the instructions, and Maria accidentally jabbed the syringe into her left index finger when the baby jumped in pain at the state hospital in Nampula, Mozambique's third-largest city.

Following hospital policy, Maria immediately ran blood tests on the mother and baby. In 30 minutes, she had the results: both were HIV positive.

Maria began to cry. She had worked with many HIV-positive patients, and she knew that the virus is transferred easily through blood.

"Lord, help me not to contract HIV," she prayed.

A hospital physician instructed Maria to take ARV drugs, which suppress the HIV virus, twice a day for the next month. After that, she would have to wait another five months to learn whether she had contracted HIV.

"My heart hurt while I waited," Maria, a mother of four, said in an interview. "I didn't know what would happen."

She also prayed fervently for God to intervene. A half year after the accident, Maria's results came back negative. She had not contracted HIV.

"I believe that it was an answer from God," Maria said. "I praised the Lord."

Three years later, in March 2017, a 30-year-old female patient jumped when Maria made a small incision on a swollen arm. The scalpel cut Maria's left thumb, drawing blood. Maria ran a blood test on the patient, and it came back HIV positive.

Maria couldn't believe it. She wept as she took ARV drugs. She prayed as she waited six months to take the HIV test. The test came back negative.

Maria, 51, shares her experience with women hospitalized after sexual assault and recommends ARV drugs and prayer.

"I say, 'God saved me from something that wasn't my fault, and He can also save you from something that wasn't [your] fault,'" she said.

At least three women have tested negative after following Maria's advice.



Two were sexual assault victims, and the third was a nurse accidentally exposed to HIV at the hospital.

"It is a miracle that I have never contracted HIV, and I tell others about the power of prayer and the Lord," Maria said.

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help open an orphanage for children who have lost their parents to HIV and AIDS in Nampula, where Maria works. Thank you for your mission offering.

28 FUNDAMENTAL Beliefs

OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH



Seventh-day Adventists accept the Bible as their only creed and hold certain fundamental beliefs to be the teaching of the Holy Scriptures. These beliefs constitute the church's understanding and expression of the teaching of Scripture. Below is an abbreviated version for your reference. A complete version can be found at www.Adventist.org/beliefs.

1. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

The Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the written Word of God, given by divine inspiration. The inspired authors spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Scriptures are the supreme, authoritative, and the infallible revelation of His will. (Ps. 119:105; Prov. 30:5, 6; Isa. 8:20; John 17:17; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Heb. 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20, 21.)

2. THE TRINITY

There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three coeternal Persons. God is immortal, all-powerful, all-knowing, above all, and ever present. He is infinite and beyond human comprehension, yet known through His self-revelation. God, who is love, is forever worthy of worship, adoration, and service by the whole creation. (Gen. 1:26; Deut. 6:4; Isa. 6:8; Matt. 28:19; John 3:16; 2 Cor. 1:21, 22; 13:14; Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Peter 1:2.)

3. THE FATHER

God the eternal Father is the Creator, Source, Sustainer, and Sovereign of all creation. He is just and holy, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. (Gen. 1:1; Deut. 4:35; Ps. 110:1, 4; John 3:16; 14:9; 1 Cor. 15:28; 1 Tim. 1:17; 1 John 4:8; Rev. 4:11.)

4. THE SON

God the eternal Son became incarnate in Jesus Christ. Through Him all things were created, the character of God is revealed, the salvation of humanity is accomplished, and the world is judged. Forever truly God, He became also truly human, Jesus the Christ. (Isa. 53:4-6; Dan. 9:25-27; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-3, 14; 5:22; 10:30; 14:1-3, 9, 13; Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4; 2 Cor. 3:18; 5:17-19; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:15-19; Heb. 2:9-18; 8:1, 2.)

5. THE HOLY SPIRIT

God the eternal Spirit was active with the Father and the Son in Creation, incarnation, and redemption. He is as much a person as are the Father and the Son. He inspired the writers of Scripture. He filled Christ's life with power. He draws and convicts human beings; and those who respond He renews and transforms into the image of God. (Gen. 1:1, 2; 2 Sam. 23:2; Ps. 51:11; Isa. 61:1; Luke 1:35; 4:18; John 14:16-18, 26; 15:26; 16:7-13; Acts 1:8; 5:3; 10:38; Rom. 5:5; 1 Cor. 12:7-11; 2 Cor. 3:18; 2 Peter 1:21.)

6. CREATION

God has revealed in Scripture the authentic and historical account of His creative activity. He created the universe, and in a recent and literal six-day creation the Lord made “the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them” and rested on the seventh day. Thus He established the Sabbath as a perpetual memorial of the work He performed. (Gen. 1:2; 5, 11; Exod. 20:8-11; Ps. 19:1-6; 33:6, 9; 104; Isa. 45:12, 18; Acts 17:24; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2; 11:3; Rev. 10:6; 14:7.)

7. THE NATURE OF HUMANITY

Man and woman were made in the image of God with individuality, the power and freedom to think and to do. Though created free beings, each is an indivisible unity of body, mind, and spirit, dependent upon God for life and breath and all else. (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:7, 15; 3; Ps. 8:4-8; 51:5, 10; 58:3; Jer. 17:9; Acts 17:24-28; Rom. 5:12-17; 2 Cor. 5:19, 20; Eph. 2:3; 1 Thess. 5:23; 1 John 3:4; 4:7, 8, 11, 20.)

8. THE GREAT CONTROVERSY

All humanity is now involved in a great controversy between Christ and Satan regarding the character of God, His law, and His sovereignty over the universe. This conflict originated in heaven when a created being, endowed with freedom of choice, in self-exaltation became Satan, God’s adversary, and led into rebellion a portion of the angels. (Gen. 3; 6-8; Job 1:6-12; Isa. 14:12-14; Ezek. 28:12-18; Rom. 1:19-32; 3:4; 5:12-21; 8:19-22; 1 Cor. 4:9; Heb. 1:14; 1 Peter 5:8; 2 Peter 3:6; Rev. 12:4-9.)

9. THE LIFE, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

In Christ’s life of perfect obedience to God’s will, His suffering, death, and resurrection, God provided the only means of atonement for human sin, so that those who by faith accept this atonement may have eternal life, and the whole creation may better understand the infinite and holy love of the Creator. (Gen. 3:15; Ps. 22:1; Isa. 53; John 3:16; 14:30; Rom. 1:4; 3:25; 4:25; 8:3, 4; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4, 20-22; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15, 19-21; Phil. 2:6-11; Col. 2:15; 1 Peter 2:21, 22; 2 John 2:2; 4:10.)

10. THE EXPERIENCE OF SALVATION

In infinite love and mercy God made Christ, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, so that in Him we might be made the righteousness of God. Led by the Holy Spirit we sense our need, acknowledge our sinfulness, repent of our transgressions, and exercise faith in Jesus as Saviour and Lord, Substitute and Example. (Gen. 3:15; Isa. 45:22; 53; Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 33:11; 36:25-27; Hab. 2:4; Mark 9:23, 24; John 3:3-8, 16; 16:8; Rom. 3:21-26; 8:1-4, 14-17; 5:6-10; 10:17; 12:2; 2 Cor. 5:17-21; Gal. 1:4; 3:13, 14, 26; 4:4-7; Eph. 2:4-10; Col. 1:13, 14; Titus 3:3-7; Heb. 8:7-12; 1 Peter 1:23; 2:21, 22; 2 Peter 1:3, 4; Rev. 13:8.)

11. GROWING IN CHRIST

By His death on the cross Jesus triumphed over the forces of evil. He who subjugated the demonic spirits during His earthly ministry has broken their power and made certain their ultimate doom. Jesus’ victory gives us victory over the evil forces that still seek to control us, as we walk with Him in peace, joy, and assurance of His love. (1 Chron. 29:11; Ps. 1:1, 2; 23:4; 77:11, 12; Matt. 20:25-28; 25:31-46; Luke 10:17-20; John 20:21; Rom. 8:38, 39; 2 Cor. 3:17, 18; Gal. 5:22-25; Eph. 5:19, 20; 6:12-18; Phil. 3:7-14; Col. 1:13, 14; 2:6, 14, 15; 1 Thess. 5:16-18, 23; Heb. 10:25; James 1:27; 2 Peter 2:9; 3:18; 1 John 4:4.)

12. THE CHURCH

The church is the community of believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. In continuity with the people of God in Old Testament times, we are called out from the world; and we join together for worship, for fellowship, for instruction in the Word, for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, for service to humanity, and for the worldwide proclamation of the gospel. (Gen. 12:1-3; Exod. 19:3-7; Matt. 16:13-20; 18:18; 28:19, 20; Acts 2:38-42; 7:38; 1 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 1:22, 23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11; 5:23-27; Col. 1:17, 18; 1 Peter 2:9)

13. THE REMNANT AND ITS MISSION

The universal church is composed of all who truly believe in Christ, but in the last days, a time of widespread apostasy, a remnant has been called out to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. This remnant announces the arrival of the judgment hour, proclaims salvation through Christ, and heralds the approach of His second advent. (Dan. 7:9-14; Isa. 1:9; 11:11; Jer. 23:3; Mic. 2:12; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Peter 1:16-19; 4:17; 2 Peter 3:10-14; Jude 3, 14; Rev. 12:17; 14:6-12; 18:1-4.)

14. UNITY IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

The church is one body with many members, called from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. In Christ we are a new creation; distinctions of race, culture, learning, and nationality, and differences between high and low, rich and poor, male and female, must not be divisive among us. (Ps. 133:1; Matt. 28:19, 20; John 17:20-23; Acts 17:26, 27; Rom. 12:4, 5; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 5:16, 17; Gal. 3:27-29; Eph. 2:13-16; 4:3-6, 11-16; Col. 3:10-15.)

15. BAPTISM

By baptism we confess our faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and testify of our death to sin and of our purpose to walk in newness of life. Thus we acknowledge Christ as Lord and Saviour, become His people, and are received as members by His church. (Matt. 28:19, 20; Acts 2:38; 16:30-33; 22:16; Rom. 6:1-6; Gal. 3:27; Col. 2:12, 13.)

16. THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper is a participation in the emblems of the body and blood of Jesus as an expression of faith in Him, our Lord and Saviour. The communion service is open to all believing Christians. (Matt. 26:17-30; John 6:48-63; 13:1-17; 1 Cor. 10:16, 17; 11:23-30; Rev. 3:20.)

17. SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND MINISTRIES

God bestows upon all members of His church in every age spiritual gifts that each member is to employ in loving ministry for the common good of the church and of humanity. According to the Scriptures, these gifts include such ministries as faith, healing, prophecy, proclamation, teaching, administration, reconciliation, compassion, and self-sacrificing service and charity for the help and encouragement of people. (Acts 6:1-7; Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:7-11, 27, 28; Eph. 4:8, 11-16; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; 1 Peter 4:10, 11.)

18. THE GIFT OF PROPHECY

The Scriptures testify that one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church, and we believe it was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. Her writings speak with prophetic authority and . . . make clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. (Num. 12:6; 2 Chron. 20:20; Amos 3:7; Joel 2:28, 29; Acts 2:14-21; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Heb. 1:1-3; Rev. 12:17; 19:10; 22:8, 9.)

19. THE LAW OF GOD

The great principles of God's law are embodied in the Ten Commandments and exemplified in the life of Christ. They express God's love, will, and purposes concerning human conduct and relationships and are binding upon all people in every age. These precepts are the basis of God's covenant with His people and the standard in God's judgment. (Exod. 20:1-17; Deut. 28:1-14; Ps. 19:7-14; 40:7, 8; Matt. 5:17-20; 22:36-40; John 14:15; 15:7-10; Rom. 8:3, 4; Eph. 2:8-10; Heb. 8:8-10; 1 John 2:3; 5:3; Rev. 12:17; 14:12.)

20. THE SABBATH

The gracious Creator, after the six days of Creation, rested on the seventh day and instituted the Sabbath for all people as a memorial of Creation. The fourth commandment of God's unchangeable law requires the observance of this seventh-day Sabbath as the day of rest, worship, and ministry in harmony with the teaching and practice of Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath. (Gen. 2:1-3; Exod. 20:8-11; 31:13-17; Lev. 23:32; Deut. 5:12-15; Isa. 56:5, 6; 58:13, 14; Ezek. 20:12, 20; Matt. 12:1-12; Mark 1:32; Luke 4:16; Heb. 4:1-11.)

21. STEWARDSHIP

We are God's stewards, entrusted by Him with time and opportunities, abilities and possessions, and the blessings of the earth and its resources. We are responsible to Him for their proper use. We acknowledge God's ownership by faithful service to Him and our fellow human beings, and by returning tithe and giving offerings for the proclamation of His gospel and the support and growth of His church. (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:15; 1 Chron. 29:14; Haggai 1:3-11; Mal. 3:8-12; Matt. 23:23; Rom. 15:26, 27; 1 Cor. 9:9-14; 2 Cor. 8:1-15; 9:7.)

22. CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

We are called to be a godly people who think, feel, and act in harmony with biblical principles in all aspects of personal and social life. For the Spirit to recreate in us the character of our Lord we involve ourselves only in those things that will produce Christlike purity, health, and joy in our lives. (Gen. 7:2; Exod. 20:15; Lev. 11:1-47; Ps. 106:3; Rom. 12:1, 2; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20; 10:31; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; 10:5; Eph. 5:1-21; Phil. 2:4; 4:8; 1 Tim. 2:9, 10; Titus 2:11, 12; 1 Peter 3:1-4; 1 John 2:6; 3 John 2.)

23. MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

Marriage was divinely established in Eden and affirmed by Jesus to be a lifelong union between a man and a woman in loving companionship. For the Christian a marriage commitment is to God as well as to the spouse, and should be entered into only between a man and a woman who share a common faith. (Gen. 2:18-25; Exod. 20:12; Deut. 6:5-9; Prov. 22:6; Mal. 4:5, 6; Matt. 5:31, 32; 19:3-9, 12; Mark 10:11, 12; John 2:1-11; 1 Cor. 7:7, 10, 11; 2 Cor. 6:14; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4.)

24. CHRIST'S MINISTRY IN THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY

There is a sanctuary in heaven, the true tabernacle that the Lord set up and not humans. In it Christ ministers on our behalf, making available to believers the benefits of His atoning sacrifice offered once for all on the cross. At His ascension, He was inaugurated as our great High Priest and began His intercessory ministry, which was typified by the work of the high priest in the holy place of the earthly sanctuary. (Lev. 16; Num. 14:34; Ezek. 4:6; Dan. 7:9-27; 8:13, 14; 9:24-27; Heb. 1:3; 2:16, 17; 4:14-16; 8:1-5; 9:11-28; 10:19-22; Rev. 8:3-5; 11:19; 14:6, 7; 20:12; 14:12; 22:11, 12.)

25. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

The second coming of Christ is the blessed hope of the church, the grand climax of the gospel. The Saviour's coming will be literal, personal, visible, and worldwide. When He returns, the righteous dead will be resurrected, and together with the righteous living will be glorified and taken to heaven, but the unrighteous will die. (Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 21; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 5:1-6; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; 2:8; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Titus 2:13; Heb. 9:28; Rev. 1:7; 14:14-20; 19:11-21.)

26. DEATH AND RESURRECTION

The wages of sin is death. But God, who alone is immortal, will grant eternal life to His redeemed. Until that day death is an unconscious state for all people. When Christ, who is our life, appears, the resurrected righteous and the living righteous will be glorified and caught up to meet their Lord. The second resurrection, the resurrection of the unrighteous, will take place a thousand years later. (Job 19:25-27; Ps. 146:3, 4; Eccl. 9:5, 6, 10; Dan. 12:2, 13; Isa. 25:8; John 5:28, 29; 11:11-14; Rom. 6:23; 16; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; Col. 3:4; 1 Thess. 4:13-17; 1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 20:1-10.)

27. THE MILLENNIUM AND THE END OF SIN

The millennium is the thousand-year reign of Christ with His saints in heaven between the first and second resurrections. During this time the wicked dead will be judged; the earth will be utterly desolate, without living human inhabitants, but occupied by Satan and his angels. At its close, Christ with His saints and the Holy City will descend from heaven to earth. The unrighteous dead will then be resurrected, and with Satan and his angels will surround the city; but fire from God will consume them and cleanse the earth. The universe will thus be freed of sin and sinners forever.

(Jer. 4:23-26; Ezek. 28:18, 19; Mal. 4:1; 1 Cor. 6:2, 3; Rev. 20; 21:1-5.)

28. THE NEW EARTH

On the new earth, in which righteousness dwells, God will provide an eternal home for the redeemed and a perfect environment for everlasting life, love, joy, and learning in His presence. For here God Himself will dwell with His people, and suffering and death will have passed away. The great controversy will be ended, and sin will be no more. All things, animate and inanimate, will declare that God is love; and He shall reign forever. Amen. (Isa. 35; 65:17-25; Matt. 5:5; 2 Peter 3:13; Rev. 11:15; 21:1-7; 22:1-5.)