

## Lesson 7

### Indestructible Hope

### Sabbath Afternoon, August 6

When trials come, remember that they are sent for your good. . . . When trials and tribulations come to you know that they are sent in order that you may receive from the Lord of glory renewed strength and increased humility, so that He may safely bless and support and uphold you. In faith and with the hope that “maketh not ashamed,” lay hold of the promises of God. . . .

The Lord designs that His people shall be happy, and He opens before us one source of consolation after another, that we may be filled with joy and peace in the midst of our present experience. We are not to wait until we shall get into heaven for brightness and comfort and joy. We are to have them right here in this life. . . . We miss very much because we do not grasp the blessings that may be ours in our afflictions. All our sufferings and sorrows, all our temptations and trials, all our sadness and griefs, all our persecutions and privations, and in short all things, work together for our good. All experiences and circumstances are God’s workmen whereby good is brought to us. Let us look at the light behind the cloud.

—*My Life Today*, p. 185.

Now when you can no longer be active, and infirmities press upon you, all that God requires of you is to trust Him. Commit the keeping of your soul to Him as unto a faithful Creator. His mercies are sure, His covenant is everlasting. Happy is the man whose hope is in the Lord his God, who keepeth truth forever. Let your mind grasp the promises and hold to them. If you cannot call to mind readily the rich assurance contained in the precious promises, listen to them from the lips of another. What fullness, what love and assurance are found in these words from the lips of God Himself, proclaiming His love, His pity and interest in the children of His care:

“The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin” (Exodus 34:6, 7).

—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 231.

The Bible reveals Christ to us as the Good Shepherd, seeking with unwearied feet for the lost sheep. By methods peculiarly His own He helped all who were in need of help. With tender, courteous grace He ministered to sin-sick souls, bringing healing and strength. . . .

The Saviour’s entire life was characterized by disinterested benevolence and the beauty of holiness. He is our pattern of goodness. From the beginning of His ministry, men began to comprehend more clearly the character of God. He carried out His teachings in His own life. He showed consistency without obstinacy, benevolence without weakness, tenderness and sympathy without sentimentalism. He was highly social, yet He possessed a reserve that discouraged any familiarity. His temperance never led to bigotry or austerity. He was not conformed to the world, yet He was attentive to the wants of the least among men.

—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, pp. 261, 262.

## Sunday, August 7

### The Big Picture

Viewing the situation of the faithful in his day, [Habakkuk] expressed the burden of his heart in the inquiry: “O Lord, how long shall I cry, and Thou wilt not hear! even cry out unto Thee of violence, and Thou wilt not save! Why dost Thou show me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance? . . .” Habakkuk 1:2–4.

God answered the cry of His loyal children. Through His chosen mouthpiece He revealed His determination to bring chastisement upon the nation that had turned from Him to serve the gods of the heathen. Within the lifetime of some who were even then making inquiry regarding the future, He would miraculously shape the affairs of the ruling nations of earth and bring the Babylonians into the ascendancy. . . . The princes of Judah and the fairest of the people were to be carried captive to Babylon; the Judean cities and villages and the cultivated fields were to be laid waste; nothing was to be spared.

Confident that even in this terrible judgment the purpose of God for His people would in some way be fulfilled, Habakkuk bowed in submission to the revealed will of Jehovah. . . . And then, his faith reaching out beyond the forbidding prospect of the immediate future, and laying fast hold on the precious promises that reveal God’s love for His trusting children, the prophet added, “We shall not die.” Verse 12. With this declaration of faith he rested his case, and that of every believing Israelite, in the hands of a compassionate God.

—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 385, 386.

The faith that strengthened Habakkuk and all the holy and the just in those days of deep trial was the same faith that sustains God’s people today. In the darkest hours, under circumstances the most forbidding, the Christian believer may keep his soul stayed upon the source of all light and power. Day by day, through faith in God, his hope and courage may be renewed. “The just shall live by his faith.” In the service of God there need be no despondency, no wavering, no fear. The Lord will more than fulfill the highest expectations of those who put their trust in Him. He will give them the wisdom their varied necessities demand.

—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 386, 387.

The time of waiting may seem long, the soul may be oppressed by discouraging circumstances, many in whom confidence has been placed may fall by the way; but with the prophet who endeavored to encourage Judah in a time of unparalleled apostasy, let us confidently declare, “The Lord is in His holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him.”

Habakkuk 2:20. Let us ever hold in remembrance the cheering message, “The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.” Verse 3.

—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 387, 388.

Monday, August 8

Who Our Father Is

It was generally believed by the Jews that sin is punished in this life. Every affliction was regarded as the penalty of some wrongdoing, either of the sufferer himself or of his parents. It is true that all suffering results from the transgression of God's law, but this truth had become perverted. Satan, the author of sin and all its results, had led men to look upon disease and death as proceeding from God,—as punishment arbitrarily inflicted on account of sin. Hence one upon whom some great affliction or calamity had fallen had the additional burden of being regarded as a great sinner. . . .

God had given a lesson designed to prevent this. The history of Job had shown that suffering is inflicted by Satan, and is overruled by God for purposes of mercy. But Israel did not understand the lesson. The same error for which God had reproved the friends of Job was repeated by the Jews in their rejection of Christ.

The belief of the Jews in regard to the relation of sin and suffering was held by Christ's disciples. While Jesus corrected their error, He did not explain the cause of the man's affliction, but told them what would be the result. Because of it the works of God would be made manifest.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 471.

True holiness and humility are inseparable. The nearer the soul comes to God, the more completely is it humbled and subdued. When Job heard the voice of the Lord out of the whirlwind, he exclaimed, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:6). It was when Isaiah saw the glory of the Lord and heard the cherubim crying, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts," that he cried out, "Woe is me! for I am undone" (Isaiah 6:3, 5). . . .

He who catches a glimpse of the matchless love of Christ counts all other things as loss, and looks upon Him as the chiefest among ten thousand and as the one altogether lovely. As seraphim and cherubim look upon Christ, they cover their faces with their wings. Their own perfection and beauty are not displayed in the presence and glory of their Lord. Then how improper it is for men to exalt themselves! Let them rather be clothed with humility, cease all strife for supremacy, and learn what it means to be meek and lowly of heart. He who contemplates God's glory and infinite love, will have humble views of himself, but by beholding the character of God, he will be changed into His divine image.

—*That I May Know Him*, p. 175.

## Tuesday, August 9

### Our Father's Presence

Many have confused ideas as to what constitutes faith, and they live altogether below their privileges. They confuse feeling and faith, and are continually distressed and perplexed in mind; for Satan takes all possible advantage of their ignorance and inexperience. . . . We are to believe that we are chosen of God, to be saved by the exercise of faith, through the grace of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit; and we are to praise and glorify God for such a marvelous manifestation of His unmerited favor. It is the love of God that draws the soul to Christ, to be graciously received, and presented to the Father. . . .

The Father sets His love upon His elect people who live in the midst of men. These are the people whom Christ has redeemed by the price of His own blood; and because they respond to the drawing of Christ, through the sovereign mercy of God, they are elected to be saved as His obedient children. Upon them is manifested the free grace of God, the love wherewith He hath loved them. Everyone who will humble himself as a little child, who will receive and obey the word of God with a child's simplicity, will be among the elect of God.

—*Our High Calling*, p. 77.

With the beloved John I call upon you to “behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” What love, what matchless love, that, sinners and aliens as we are, we may be brought back to God and adopted into His family! We may address Him by the endearing name, “Our Father,” which is a sign of our affection for Him and a pledge of His tender regard and relationship to us. . . .

All the paternal love which has come down from generation to generation through the channel of human hearts, all the springs of tenderness which have opened in the souls of men, are but as a tiny rill to the boundless ocean when compared with the infinite, exhaustless love of God. Tongue cannot utter it; pen cannot portray it. You may meditate upon it every day of your life; you may search the Scriptures diligently in order to understand it; you may summon every power and capability that God has given you, in the endeavor to comprehend the love and compassion of the heavenly Father; and yet there is an infinity beyond. You may study that love for ages; yet you can never fully comprehend the length and the breadth, the depth and the height, of the love of God in giving His Son to die for the world. Eternity itself can never fully reveal it.

—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 739, 740.

Wednesday, August 10

Our Father's Plans for Us

Let us be hopeful and courageous. . . . [God] knows our every necessity. He has all power. He can bestow upon His servants the measure of efficiency that their need demands. His infinite love and compassion never weary. With the majesty of omnipotence He unites the gentleness and care of a tender shepherd. We need have no fear that He will not fulfill His promises. He is eternal truth. Never will He change the covenant that He has made with those that love Him. His promises to His church stand fast forever. He will make her an eternal excellence, a joy of many generations.

Study the forty-first chapter of Isaiah, and strive to understand it in all its significance. . . .

He who has chosen Christ has joined himself to a power that no array of human wisdom or strength can overthrow. "Fear thou not; for I am with thee," He declares; "be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness." "I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee Fear not; I will help thee." Verses 10, 13.

—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, pp. 38, 39.

God is Himself the source of all mercy. His name is "merciful and gracious." Exodus 34:6. He does not treat us according to our desert. He does not ask if we are worthy of His love, but He pours upon us the riches of His love, to make us worthy. He is not vindictive. He seeks not to punish, but to redeem. Even the severity which He manifests through His providences is manifested for the salvation of the wayward. He yearns with intense desire to relieve the woes of men and to apply His balsam to their wounds.

—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 22.

The purpose which God seeks to accomplish through His people today is the same that He desired to accomplish through Israel when He brought them forth out of Egypt. By beholding the goodness, the mercy, the justice, and the love of God revealed in the church, the world is to have a representation of His character. And when the law of God is thus exemplified in the life, even the world will recognize the superiority of those who love and fear and serve God above every other people on the earth. The Lord has His eye upon every one of His people; He has His plans concerning each. It is His purpose that those who practice His holy precepts shall be a distinguished people. To the people of God today as well as to ancient Israel belong the words written by Moses through the Spirit of Inspiration: "Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth." Deuteronomy 7:6. . . .

Even these words fail of expressing the greatness and the glory of God's purpose to be accomplished through His people. Not to this world only but to the universe are we to make manifest the principles of His kingdom.

—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 12, 13.

Thursday, August 11

## Our Father's Discipline

There is a lesson for us in [the] experience of Paul, for it reveals God's way of working. The Lord can bring victory out of that which may seem to us discomfiture and defeat. We are in danger of forgetting God, of looking at the things which are seen, instead of beholding by the eye of faith the things which are unseen. When misfortune or calamity comes, we are ready to charge God with neglect or cruelty. If He sees fit to cut off our usefulness in some line, we mourn, not stopping to think that thus God may be working for our good. We need to learn that chastisement is a part of His great plan and that under the rod of affliction the Christian may sometimes do more for the Master than when engaged in active service.

—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 481.

Many who profess the name of Christ and claim to be looking for His speedy coming, know not what it is to suffer for Christ's sake. Their hearts are not subdued by grace, and they are not dead to self, as is often shown in various ways. At the same time they are talking of having trials. But the principal cause of their trials is an unsubdued heart, which makes self so sensitive that it is often crossed. If such could realize what it is to be a humble follower of Christ, a true Christian, they would begin to work in good earnest and begin right. They would first die to self, then be instant in prayer, and check every passion of the heart. Give up your selfconfidence and self-sufficiency, brethren, and follow the meek Pattern. Ever keep Jesus in your mind that He is your example and you must tread in His footsteps. Look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame. He endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself. He for our sins was once the meek, slain lamb, wounded, bruised, smitten, and afflicted.

Let us, then, cheerfully suffer something for Jesus' sake, crucify self daily, and be partakers of Christ's sufferings here, that we may be made partakers with Him of His glory, and be crowned with glory, honor, immortality, and eternal life.

—*Early Writings*, pp. 113, 114.

If we hope to wear the crown, we must expect to bear the cross. Our greatest trials will come from those who profess godliness. It was so with the world's Redeemer; it will be so with His followers. . . . Those who are in earnest to win the crown of eternal life need not be surprised or disheartened because at every step toward the heavenly Canaan they meet with obstacles and encounter trials. . . .

The Saviour knows what is best. Faith grows by conflict with doubt and difficulty and trial. Virtue gathers strength by resistance to temptation. . . . John in holy vision beholds the faithful souls that come up out of great tribulation, surrounding the throne of God, clad in white robes, and crowned with immortal glory. . . . Their faithfulness to God and to His Word stands revealed, and Heaven's high honors are awarded them as conquerors.

—*Our High Calling*, p. 361.

**Friday, August 12**  
**For Further Reading**

*This Day With God*, “Rejoice in the Lord,” p. 156;

*Education*, “The School of the Hereafter,” pp. 301–309.