

First Quarter 2023

EGW Notes - Lesson 11, 11 – 17 March

## ***Managing In Tough Times***

---



### **Sabbath Afternoon, March 11**

It is not the will of God that His people should be weighed down with care. But our Lord does not deceive us. He does not say to us, “Do not fear; there are no dangers in your path.” He knows there are trials and dangers, and He deals with us plainly. He does not propose to take His people out of a world of sin and evil, but He points them to a never-failing refuge.

**— *That I May Know Him, p. 225.***

God knows our wants, and has provided for them. The Lord has a treasure house of supplies for His children, and can give them what they need under all circumstances. Then why do we not trust Him? He has made precious promises to His children on condition of faithful obedience to His precepts. There is not a burden but He can remove, no darkness but He can dispel, no weakness but He can change to power, no fears but He can calm, no worthy aspiration but He can guide and justify.

**— *That I May Know Him, p. 224.***

Often when placed in a trying situation we doubt that the Spirit of God has been leading us. But it was the Spirit’s leading that brought Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan. When God brings us into trial, He has a

purpose to accomplish for our good. Jesus did not presume on God's promises by going unbidden into temptation, neither did He give up to despondency when temptation came upon Him. Nor should we. "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." He says, "Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the Most High: and call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me." 1 Corinthians 10:13; Psalm 50:14, 15.

**– *The Desire of Ages*, p. 126.**

When trials arise that seem unexplainable, we should not allow our peace to be spoiled. However unjustly we may be treated, let not passion arise. By indulging a spirit of retaliation we injure ourselves. We destroy our own confidence in God, and grieve the Holy Spirit. There is by our side a witness, a heavenly messenger, who will lift up for us a standard against the enemy. He will shut us in with the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. Beyond this Satan cannot penetrate. He cannot pass this shield of holy light.

While the world is progressing in wickedness, none of us need flatter ourselves that we shall have no difficulties. But it is these very difficulties that bring us into the audience chamber of the Most High. We may seek counsel of One who is infinite in wisdom.

The Lord says, "Call upon Me in the day of trouble." Psalm 50:15. He invites us to present to Him our perplexities and necessities, and our need of divine help. He bids us be instant in prayer. As soon as difficulties arise, we are to offer to Him our sincere, earnest petitions. By our importunate prayers we give evidence of our strong confidence in God. The sense of our need leads us to pray earnestly, and our heavenly Father is moved by our supplications.

**– *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 171, 172.**

## Sunday, March 12 Putting God First

Jehoshaphat was a man of courage and valor. For years he had been strengthening his armies and his fortified cities. He was well prepared to meet almost any foe; yet in this crisis he put not his trust in the arm of flesh. Not by disciplined armies and fenced cities, but by a living faith in the God of Israel, could he hope to gain the victory over these heathen who boasted of their power to humble Judah in the eyes of the nations. . . .

With confidence Jehoshaphat could say to the Lord, “Our eyes are upon Thee.” For years he had taught the people to trust in the One who in past ages had so often interposed to save His chosen ones from utter destruction; and now, when the kingdom was in peril, Jehoshaphat did not stand alone; “all Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.” Unitedly they fasted and prayed; unitedly they besought the Lord to put their enemies to confusion, that the name of Jehovah might be glorified.

God was the strength of Judah in this crisis, and He is the strength of His people today. We are not to trust in princes, or to set men in the place of God. We are to remember that human beings are fallible and erring, and that He who has all power is our strong tower of defense. In every emergency we are to feel that the battle is His. His resources are limitless, and apparent impossibilities will make the victory all the greater.

**—*Conflict and Courage, p. 217.***

[When] we fasten our minds upon the misrepresentations of Satan [we] dishonor God by mistrusting Him and by murmuring against Him. When we act like culprits under sentence of death we bear false witness against God. The Father gave His only begotten and well-beloved Son to die for us, and in so doing He placed great honor upon humanity, for in Christ the link that was broken through sin was reunited and man again connected with Heaven.

You who doubt the mercy of God, look at the Lamb of God, look at the Man of sorrows, who bore your grief and suffered for your sin. He is your friend. He died on the cross because He loved you. He is touched with the feeling of your infirmities and bears you up before the throne. In view of His unspeakable love should not hope, love, and gratitude be cherished in your heart? Should not gladness fill your service to God?

**– *That I May Know Him, p. 224.***

The promise itself is of no value unless I fully believe that He that has made the promise is abundantly able to fulfill, and infinite in power to do all that He has said. . . .

We cannot dishonor God more than in distrusting His Word. Feeling is not at all reliable. A religion fed and kept alive by emotions is valueless. God's Word is the foundation upon which our hopes may safely rest, and in the confidence we have in the Word of God we are established, strengthened, settled, riveted to the Eternal Rock.

**– *This Day With God, p. 156.***

## **Monday, March 13 Trust God, Not Your Own Resources**

David, in his prosperity, did not preserve that humility of character and trust in God which characterized the earlier part of his life. He looked upon the accessions to the kingdom with pride, and contrasted their then prosperous condition with their few numbers and little strength when he ascended the throne, taking glory to himself. He gratified his ambitious feelings in yielding to the temptations of the Devil to number Israel, that he might compare their former weakness to their then prosperous state under his rule. This was displeasing to God, and contrary to his express command. It would lead Israel to rely upon their strength of numbers, instead of the living God.

The work of numbering Israel is not fully completed before David feels convicted that he has committed a great sin against God. He sees his error, and humbles himself before God, confessing his great sin in foolishly numbering the people. But his repentance came too late. The word had already gone forth from the Lord to his faithful prophet, to carry a message to David, and offer him his choice of punishments for his transgression. David still shows that he has confidence in God. He chooses to fall into the hands of a merciful God, rather than be left to the cruel mercies of wicked men.

**—*Spiritual Gifts, vol. 4a, p. 92.***

By His own example the Saviour has shown that His followers can be in the world and yet not of the world. He came not to partake of its delusive pleasures, to be swayed by its customs, and to follow its practices, but to do His Father's will, to seek and save the lost. With this object before him the Christian may stand uncontaminated in any surroundings. Whatever his station or circumstances, exalted or humble, he will manifest the power of true religion in the faithful performance of duty.

Not in freedom from trial, but in the midst of it, is Christian character developed. Exposure to rebuffs and opposition leads the follower of Christ to greater watchfulness and more earnest prayer to the mighty Helper. Severe trial endured by the grace of God develops patience, vigilance, fortitude, and a deep and abiding trust in God. It is the triumph of the Christian faith that it enables its followers to suffer and be strong; to submit, and thus to conquer; to be killed all the day long, and yet to live; to bear the cross, and thus to win the crown of glory.

**—*The Acts of the Apostles, p. 467.***

If you go to God for help and wisdom, He will never disappoint your faith. . .

It may be argued that the Lord gives special wisdom to those entrusted with important responsibilities. True, if they walk humbly with Him, He will give them help for their work; and He will give you help for yours, if you seek it in the same spirit. If the Lord in His providence has placed important responsibilities upon you, He will fit you to bear these burdens, if you go to Him in faith for strength to do this. When you put your trust in Him, and depend upon His counsel, He will not leave you to your own finite judgment, to make imperfect plans and decided failures.

**—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 417, 418.**

## **Tuesday, March 14 Time to Simplify?**

Men are putting afar off the coming of the Lord. They laugh at warnings. The proud boast is made, “All things continue as they were from the beginning.” . . . . 2 Peter 3:4. . . .

Everything in the world is in agitation. The signs of the times are ominous. Coming events cast their shadows before. The Spirit of God is withdrawing from the earth, and calamity follows calamity by sea and by land. There are tempests, earthquakes, fires, floods, murders of every grade. Who can read the future? Where is security? . . .

Solemnly there come to us down through the centuries the warning words of our Lord from the Mount of Olives: “Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.” “Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”

**—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 635, 636.**

The obligations resting upon us are not small. Our sense of dependence will drive us closer to God, and our sense of duty to be performed will summon us to effort, combined with our earnest prayers—works, faith, and continual prayer. Power! Power! Our great cry is for power without measure! It awaits us. We have only to draw; to take God at His word; to act faith; to stand firmly upon the promises; to wrestle for the endowment of the grace of God. Learning is not essential; genius is not necessary; eloquence may be lacking; but the prayer of the lowly and contrite heart God hears, and when He hears no obstacles on earth can hinder. The power of God will make us effectual.

**—*This Day With God*, p. 187.**

Do we believe with all the heart that Christ is soon coming and that we are now having the last message of mercy that is ever to be given to a guilty world? Is our example what it should be? Do we, by our lives and holy conversation, show to those around us that we are looking for the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who shall change these vile bodies and fashion them like unto His glorious body? I fear that we do not believe and realize these things as we should. . . .

Angels are watching over and guarding us; we often grieve these angels by indulging in trifling conversation, jesting, and joking, and also by sinking down into a careless, stupid state. Although we may now and then make an effort for the victory and obtain it, yet if we do not keep it, but sink down into the same careless, indifferent state, unable to endure temptations and resist the enemy, we do not endure the trial of our faith that is more precious than gold. We are not suffering for Christ's sake, and glorying in tribulation.

There is a great lack of Christian fortitude and serving God from principle. We should [seek] . . . to honor and glorify God, and in all we do and say to have an eye single to His glory.

**—*Early Writings*, p. 111.**

## **Wednesday, March 15 Priorities**

Christ's call to sacrifice and unreserved surrender means crucifixion of self. In order to obey this call, we must have unquestioning faith in Him as the perfect Example, and we must have a clear realization that we are to represent Him to the world. Those who work for Christ are to work in His lines. They are to live His life. His call to unreserved surrender is to be to them supreme. They are to allow no earthly tie or interest to prevent them from giving Him the homage of their hearts and the service of their lives. Earnestly and untiringly they are to labor with God to save perishing souls from the power of the tempter.

Those who are thus connected with Christ learn constantly of Him, passing through the successive stages of progress in Christian experience. Difficulty and perplexity come to them, that they may learn more perfectly the will and way of Christ. But they pray and believe, and by exercise their faith increases.

**— *The Upward Look*, p. 235.**

The life of the Christian is not all smooth. He has stern conflicts to meet. Severe temptations assail him. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." The nearer we come to the close of this earth's history, the more delusive and ensnaring will be the attacks of the enemy. His attacks will grow fiercer and more frequent. Those who resist light and truth will become more hardened and unimpressible, and more bitter against those who love God and keep His commandments.

The influence of the Holy Spirit is the life of Christ in the soul. We do not see Christ and speak to Him, but His Holy Spirit is just as near us in one place as in another. It works in and through every one who receives Christ. Those who know the indwelling of the Spirit reveal the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.



**—E. G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1111.**

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Colossians 3:2-4.

We need to have a broader view of the Saviour as “Lord and Christ.” “All power” is given to Him to give to those who claim to believe in His name. We do not half acknowledge His right to our homage and obedience, and to our increasing faith in Him. . . .

Put yourself under discipline to Christ. Be led by His word. Heed His instruction, “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls” (Matthew 11:29).

I beseech the churches in every place to make thorough work for eternity by confession and putting away of sins. “His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness” (2 Peter 1:3). By what means? . . . “We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory” (2 Corinthians 3:18).

**—*This Day With God*, p. 290.**

## **Thursday, March 16 When No One Can Buy or Sell**

The point is fast being reached when the iniquity of transgressors will be to the full. God gives nations a certain time of probation. He sends light and evidence, that, if received, will save them, but if refused as the Jews refused light, indignation and punishment will fall upon them. If men refuse to be benefited, and choose darkness rather than light, they will reap the results of their choice. “Behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.”

The professed Christian world is advancing, as did the Jewish nation, from one degree of sinfulness to a greater degree, refusing warning after warning, and rejecting a Thus saith the Lord, while crediting the fables of men. The Lord God will soon arise in His wrath, and pour out His judgments upon those who are repeating the sins of the inhabitants of the Noachic world. . . . The fact that God had long forbearance, patience and mercy, the fact that His judgments have been long delayed, will not make the punishment any less severe when it does come.

**—E. G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1143.**

Often the follower of Christ is brought where he cannot serve God and carry forward his worldly enterprises. Perhaps it appears that obedience to some plain requirement of God will cut off his means of support. . . . When we learn the power of His word, we shall not follow the suggestions of Satan in order to obtain food or to save our lives. Our only questions will be, What is God's command? and what His promise? Knowing these, we shall obey the one, and trust the other.

In the last great conflict of the controversy with Satan those who are loyal to God will see every earthly support cut off. Because they refuse to break His law in obedience to earthly powers, they will be forbidden to buy or sell. It will finally be decreed that they shall be put to death. See Revelation 13:11-17. But to the obedient is given the promise, "He shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." Isaiah 33:16. By this promise the children of God will live.

**—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 121.**

Courage, fortitude, faith, and implicit trust in God's power to save do not come in a moment. These heavenly graces are acquired by the experience of years. By a life of holy endeavor and firm adherence to the right the children of

God were sealing their destiny. Beset with temptations without number, they knew they must resist firmly or be conquered. They felt that they had a great work to do, and at any hour they might be called to lay off their armor; and should they come to the close of life with their work undone, it would be an eternal loss. They eagerly accepted the light from heaven, as did the first disciples from the lips of Jesus.

When those early Christians were exiled to mountains and deserts, when left in dungeons to die with hunger, cold, and torture, when martyrdom seemed the only way out of their distress, they rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for Christ, who was crucified for them. Their worthy example will be a comfort and encouragement to the people of God who will be brought into the time of trouble such as never was.

**—*Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 213.***

### **Friday, March 17 For Further Reading**

*Lift Him Up*, “The Atonement—Our Foundation of Peace,” p. 332;

*This Day With God*, “Separating From Sin,” p. 94.

### ***The Atonement—Our Foundation of Peace, November 14***

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

John 14:27. {LHU 332.1}

Jesus says, “My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” The peace spoken of by the great Teacher is larger and fuller than we have imagined. Christ is ready to do large things for us, to restore our natures by making us partakers of His divine nature. He waits to link our hearts with His heart of infinite love, in

order that we may be fully reconciled to God; but it is our privilege to understand that God loves us as He loves His Son. When we believe in Christ as our personal Saviour, the peace of Christ is ours. The reconciliation provided for us in the atonement of Christ is the foundation of our peace; but gloomy feelings are no evidence that the promises of God are of no effect. You look at your feelings, and because your outlook is not all brightness, you begin to draw more closely the garment of heaviness about your soul. You look within yourself, and think that God is forsaking you. You are to look to Christ. In me, Christ says, ye shall have peace. Entering into communion with our Saviour, we enter the region of peace. {LHU 332.2}

Satan is our destroyer, but Christ is our restorer. We must put faith into constant exercise, and trust in God, whatever our feelings may be. Isaiah says: “Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.” You can say with the psalmist, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.” “Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper. And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the Lord, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the Lord; for his mercy endureth for ever. And when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord sent ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten.” “Unto you therefore which believe He is precious.” Consider the fact that the Lord has given His only begotten Son, “that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (The Review and Herald, May 19, 1896). {LHU 332.3}

## *Separating From Sin, March 26*

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. Colossians 3:1, 2. {TDG 94.1}

The requirements of God are set plainly before us, and the question to be settled is, Will we comply with them? Will we accept the conditions laid down in His Word—separation from the world? This is not the work of a moment or of a day. It is not accomplished by bowing at the family altar, and offering up lip service, neither by public exhortation and prayer. It is a lifelong work. Our consecration to God must be a living principle, interwoven with the life, and leading to self-denial and self-sacrifice. It must underlie all our thoughts and be the spring of every action. This will elevate us above the world, and separate us from its polluting influence. {TDG 94.2}

All our actions are affected by our religious experience, and if this experience is founded on God and we understand the mysteries of godliness, if we are daily receiving of the power of the world to come, and hold communion with God, and have the fellowship of the Spirit, if we are each day holding with a firmer grasp the higher life, and drawing closer and still closer to the bleeding side of the Redeemer, we shall have inwrought in us principles that are holy and elevating. Then it will be as natural for us to seek purity and holiness and separation from the world, as it is for the angels of glory to execute the mission of love assigned them in saving mortals from the corrupting influence of the world. Every one who enters the pearly gates of the city of God will be a doer of the Word. He will be a partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. It is our privilege to realize the fulness there is in Christ, and be blessed by the provision made through Him. Ample provision has been made that we should be raised from the lowlands of earth, and have our affections fastened upon God and heavenly things. {TDG 94.3}

Will this separation from the world in obedience to the divine command, unfit us for doing the work the Lord has left us? Will it hinder us from doing good to those around us? No; the firmer hold we have on heaven, the greater will be our power of usefulness in the world.—Manuscript 1, March 26, 1869, “Diligence in the Work of Preparation.” {TDG 94.4}