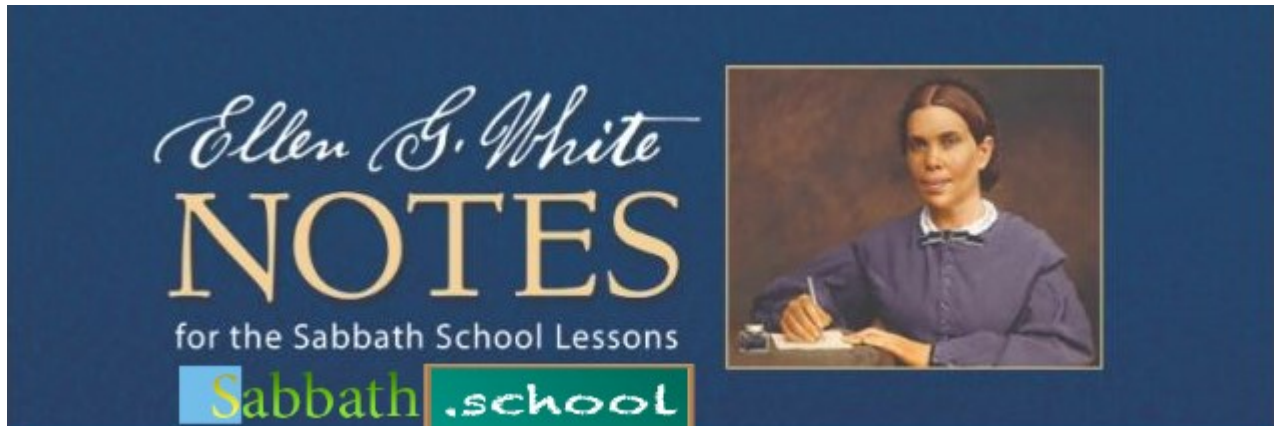


EGW Notes - Lesson 3

The Lord Reigns



Sabbath Afternoon, January 13

God calls upon men to see Him in the wonders of the heavens. "Lift up your eyes on high," He says, "and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might," Isaiah 40:26. God would have us study the works of infinity, and from this study learn to love and reverence and obey Him. The heavens and the earth with their treasures are to teach the lessons of God's love and care and power.

God calls upon His creatures to turn their attention from the confusion and perplexity around them and admire His handiwork. As we study His works, angels from heaven will be by our side to enlighten our minds and guard them from Satan's deceptions. . . .

The psalmist declares, "When Thou saidst, Seek ye My face; my heart said unto Thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." Psalm 27:8. . . . The eighty-first psalm explains

why Israel was scattered—they forgot God, as the churches in our land are forgetting Him today. Consider also the eighty-ninth, ninetieth, ninety-first, ninety-second, and ninety-third psalms.

These things were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come; and should they not be studied? . . . The word of God contains instructive lessons, given in reproof, in warning, in encouragement, and in rich promises.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, pp. 456, 457.

Our God has heaven and earth at His command, and He knows just what we need. We can see only a little way before us; “but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.” Hebrews 4:13.

Above the distractions of the earth He 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.

Not even a sparrow falls to the ground without the Father’s notice. Satan’s hatred against God leads him to delight in destroying even the dumb creatures. It is only through God’s protecting care that the birds are preserved to gladden us with their songs of joy. But He does not forget even the sparrows. “Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.” Matthew 10:31.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, pp. 272, 273.

When the attention is fastened on the cross of Christ, the whole being is ennobled. The knowledge of the

Saviour's love subdues the soul, and lifts the mind above the things of time and sense. Let us learn to estimate all temporal things in the light that shines from the cross. Let us strive to fathom the depths of humiliation to which our Saviour descended in order to make man the possessor of eternal riches. As we study the plan of redemption, the heart will feel the throb of the Saviour's love, and will be ravished by the charms of His character.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 248.

Sunday, January 14

The Lord Has Made Us

The beauties in nature are a theme for contemplation. In studying the natural loveliness surrounding us, the mind is carried up through nature to the Author of all that is lovely. All the works of God are speaking to our senses, magnifying His power, exalting His wisdom. Every created thing has in it charms which interest the child of God and mold his taste to regard these precious evidences of God's love above the work of human skill.

The prophet, in words of glowing fervor, magnifies God in His created works: "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?" "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth! I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will show forth all Thy marvelous works."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 377.

God is constantly employed in upholding and using as His servants the things that He has made. He works through the laws of nature, using them as His instruments. They are not self-acting. Nature in her work testifies of the intelligent presence and active agency of a Being who moves in all things according to His will. . . .

It is not by inherent power that year by year the earth yields its bounties and continues its march around the sun. The hand of the Infinite One is perpetually at work guiding this planet. It is God's power continually exercised that keeps the earth in position in its rotation. It is God who causes the sun to rise in the heavens. He opens the windows of heaven and gives rain.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 416.

Through the agencies of nature, God is working, day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment, to keep us alive, to build up and restore us. When any part of the body sustains injury, a healing process is at once begun; nature's agencies are set at work to restore soundness. But the power working through these agencies is the power of God. All life-giving power is from Him. When one recovers from disease, it is God who restores him. Sickness, suffering, and death are work of an antagonistic power. Satan is the destroyer; God is the restorer.

A great lesson is learned when we understand our relation to God, and His relation to us.

. . . [W]e are amenable to God as deriving our life from Him. This we do not obtain from humanity, but from God

only. We are His by creation and by redemption. Our very bodies are not our own, to treat as we please, to cripple by habits that lead to decay, making it impossible to render to God perfect service. Our lives and all our faculties belong to Him. He is caring for us every moment; He keeps the living machinery in action; if we were left to run it for one moment, we should die. We are absolutely dependent upon God.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 165.

Monday, January 15

The Lord Reigns

Before Him who ruleth in the heavens the mysteries of the past and future are alike outspread, and God sees beyond the woe and darkness and ruin that sin has wrought, the outworking of His purpose of love and blessing. Though clouds and darkness are round about Him, yet righteousness and judgment are the foundation of His throne. Through the plan of salvation a larger purpose is to be wrought out even than the salvation of man and the redemption of the earth. Through the revelation of the character of God in Christ, the beneficence of the divine government would be manifested before the universe, the charge of Satan refuted, the nature and result of sin made plain, and the perpetuity of the law fully demonstrated.

Then the extermination of sin will vindicate God's love and establish His honor before a universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law.—

That I May Know Him, p. 366.

“Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?” “My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.” “I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done.” It is impossible for the finite minds of men to fully comprehend the character or the works of the Infinite One. To the keenest intellect, to the most powerful and highly educated mind, that holy Being must ever remain clothed in mystery.

The apostle Paul exclaims: “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!” But though “clouds and darkness are round about Him: righteousness and judgment are the foundation of His throne.” [Revised Version.] We can so far comprehend His dealing with us, and the motives by which He is actuated, that we may discern boundless love and mercy united to infinite power. We can understand as much of His purposes as it is for our good to know; and beyond this we must still trust the might of the Omnipotent, the love and wisdom of the Father and Sovereign of all.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 698, 699.

“Ye that love the Lord, hate evil,” the psalmist exhorts . . . Psalm 97:10. . . . [T]hese words of the psalmist show that it is by serving God that this higher ground will be gained. We should now be putting away evilspeaking, selfish plans, everything that would hurt the influence or confuse the judgment. The heart must be emptied of all self-seeking; the conduct must be such that it will lead no soul into false paths.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 397.

Tuesday, January 16

God Is the Judge

When Christ shall come the earth will tremble before Him, and the heavens will be rolled together as a scroll, and every mountain and every island will be moved out of its place. “Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people. Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare His righteousness: for God is judge Himself” (Psalm 50:3-6). In view of the great day of God, we can see that our only safety will be found in departing from all sin and iniquity. Those who continue in sin will be found among the condemned and perishing.—*Faith and Works*, p. 116.

God brings men into trying places to see if they will trust in a power out of and above themselves. He sees not as man sees. He often has to break up human connections and change the order which man has mapped out, which is perfect in his estimation. What man thinks is for his spiritual and temporal interests may be altogether at variance with the experience he must have in order to be a follower of Christ. His idea of his own value may be far out of the way. . . .

Character must be tested, else there would be many spurious Christians who would keep up a fair semblance of religion until their inclinations, their desire to have their own way, their pride and ambition, were crossed. When by the Lord's permission sharp trials come to them, their lack of genuine religion, of the meekness and lowliness of Christ, shows them to be in need of the work of the Holy Spirit. . . .

The true Christian keeps his eyes fixed on Him who searches the heart and tries the reins, who requires truth in the inward parts. His constant prayer is, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139:23, 24).—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 266.

In the account of the judgment scene, when the reward is given to the righteous, and sentence is passed on the wicked, the righteous are represented as wondering what they have done that they should receive such reward. But they cherished an abiding faith in Christ. They were imbued with His Spirit, and, without conscious effort, they performed for Christ, in the person

of His saints, those services that bring a sure reward. But their motive in working was not to receive compensation. They regarded it as the highest honor to be allowed to work as Christ worked. What they did was done from love to Christ and to their fellowmen, and He who has identified Himself with suffering humanity accredited these acts of compassion and love as though done to Himself.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 343.

Wednesday, January 17

Ever Mindful of His Covenant

The law of love is the foundation of God's government, and the service of love the only service acceptable to Heaven. God has granted freedom of will to all, endowed men with capacity to appreciate His character, and therefore with ability to love Him and to choose His service. So long as created beings worshiped God they were in harmony throughout the universe. While love to God was supreme, love to others abounded. As there was no transgression of the law, which is the transcript of God's character, no note of discord jarred the celestial harmonies.

But known unto God are all His works, and from eternal ages the covenant of grace (unmerited favor) existed in the mind of God. It is called the everlasting covenant, for the plan of salvation was not conceived after the fall of man, but it was that which was "kept in silence through times eternal, but now is manifested, and . . . made known unto all the nations." (Romans

16:25, 26, R.V.)—*That I May Know Him*, p. 366.

The Lord of heaven is represented as raising up the fallen. He is the Friend of all who love and fear Him, and He will punish everyone who dares to lead them astray from safe paths, putting them in positions of distress as they conscientiously endeavor to keep the way of the Lord and reach the abodes of the righteous.

Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without the notice of your heavenly Father. Then let men be careful how, by word or action, they cause one of God's little ones sorrow or grief. If the little sparrow that has no soul cannot fall to the ground without the notice of our heavenly Father, surely the souls of those for whom Christ has died are precious; and will not God judge those who cause pain or disappointment to the hearts of those for whom Christ has given His life?

Who can measure or anticipate the gift of God? For ages, sin [has] interrupted the divine flow of benevolence to man, but that mercy and great love purchased for the fallen race has not ceased to accumulate; it has not lost its earthward direction. God lives and reigns, and in Christ He has poured forth on the world a healing flood. Our Saviour has made every provision for man.—*The Upward Look*, p. 364.

Thursday, January 18

Your Testimonies Are Very Sure

The ten holy precepts spoken by Christ upon Sinai's mount were the revelation of the character of God, and made known to the world the fact that He had jurisdiction over the whole human heritage. That law of ten precepts of the greatest love that can be presented to man is the voice of God from heaven speaking to the soul in promise, "This do, and you will not come under the dominion and control of Satan." There is not a negative in that law, although it may appear thus. . . .

The ancient Jewish church were the highly favored people of God, brought out of Egypt and acknowledged as His own peculiar treasure. The many and exceeding great and precious promises to them as a people, were the hope and confidence of the Jewish church. Herein they trusted, and believed their salvation sure. No other people professed to be governed by the commandments of God.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1105.

The psalmist declares, "Great peace have they which love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them." Psalm 119:165. Men cannot manufacture peace. Human plans for the purification and uplifting of individuals or of society will fail of producing peace, because they do not reach the heart. The only power that can create or perpetuate true peace is the grace of Christ. When this is implanted in the heart, it will cast out the evil passions that cause strife and dissension. "Instead of the thorn

shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree;" and life's desert "shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." Isaiah 55:13; 35:1.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 302.

Let the student take the Bible as his guide and stand firm for principle, and he may aspire to any height of attainment. All the philosophies of human nature have led to confusion and shame when God has not been recognized as all in all. But the precious faith inspired of God imparts strength and nobility of character. As His goodness, His mercy, and His love are dwelt upon, clearer and still clearer will be the perception of truth; higher, holier, the desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought is transformed by [communion] with God through the study of His word. Truth is so large, so far-reaching, so deep, so broad, that self is lost sight of. The heart is softened and subdued into humility, kindness, and love.

And the natural powers are enlarged because of holy obedience. From the study of the word of life, students may come forth with minds expanded, elevated, ennobled. If they are, like Daniel, hearers and doers of the word of God, they may advance as he did in all branches of learning. Being pure-minded, they will become strong-minded. Every intellectual faculty will be quickened. They may so educate and discipline themselves that all within the sphere of their influence shall see what man can be, and what he can do, when connected with the God of wisdom and power.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 465, 466.

Friday, January 19

For Further Reading

Lift Him Up, “Christ Died for Us,” p. 233;

This Day With God, “The Judgment Is Coming,” p. 296.