

The background of the cover is a photograph of a sunset over a large body of water. The sun is a bright, glowing orb positioned just above a dark mountain range. The sky is a gradient of warm colors, from deep orange near the horizon to a lighter yellow at the top. The water is calm, reflecting the sun's light in a vertical column. Several small, dark silhouettes of boats are scattered across the water's surface. In the foreground, the dark, out-of-focus silhouettes of trees and bushes are visible at the bottom of the frame.

The Observance of the Sabbath

Ellen White

The Observance of the Sabbath

Great blessings are enfolded in the observance of the Sabbath, and God desires that the Sabbath day shall be to us a day of joy. There was joy at the institution of the Sabbath. God looked with satisfaction upon the work of His hands. All things that He had made He pronounced "very good." Genesis 1:31. Heaven and earth were filled with rejoicing. "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Job 38:7. Though sin has entered the world to mar His perfect work, **God still gives to us the Sabbath as a witness that One omnipotent, infinite in goodness and mercy, created all things. Our heavenly Father desires through the observance of the Sabbath to preserve among men a knowledge of Himself. He desires that the Sabbath shall direct our minds to Him as the true and living God, and that through knowing Him we may have life and peace.**

When the Lord delivered His people Israel from Egypt and committed to them His law, He taught them that **by the observance of the Sabbath they were to be distinguished from idolaters.** It was this that made the distinction between those who acknowledge the sovereignty of God and those who refuse to accept Him as their Creator and King. "It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever," the Lord said. "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant." Exodus 31:17, 16.

As the Sabbath was the sign that distinguished Israel when they came out of Egypt to enter the earthly Canaan, so it is the sign that now distinguishes God's people as they come out from the world to enter the heavenly rest. The Sabbath is a sign of the relationship existing [350] between God and His people, a sign that they honor His law. **It distinguishes between His loyal subjects and transgressors.**

From the pillar of cloud Christ declared concerning the Sabbath: "**Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.**" Exodus 31:13. The Sabbath given to the world as the sign of God as the Creator is also the sign of Him as the Sanctifier. The power that created all things is the power that re-creates the soul in His own likeness. To those who keep holy the Sabbath day it is the sign of sanctification. True sanctification is harmony with God, oneness with Him in character. It is received through obedience to those principles that are the transcript of His character. And the Sabbath is the sign of obedience. He who from the heart obeys the fourth commandment will obey the whole law. He is sanctified through obedience.

To us as to Israel the Sabbath is given "for a perpetual covenant." To those who reverence His holy day the Sabbath is a sign that God recognizes them as His chosen people. It is a pledge that He will fulfill to them His covenant. Every soul who accepts the sign of God's government places himself under the divine, everlasting covenant. He fastens himself to the golden chain of obedience, every link of which is a promise.

The fourth commandment alone of all the ten contains the seal of the great Lawgiver, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. Those who obey this commandment take upon themselves His name, and all the blessings it involves are theirs. "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel saying unto them, [351]

"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee:
The Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:
The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.
And they shall put My Name upon the children of Israel;
And I will bless them." Numbers 6:22-27.

Through Moses was given also the promise: "The Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto Himself, as He hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in His ways. And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord. . . . And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them." Deuteronomy 28:9-13.

The psalmist, speaking by the Holy Spirit, says:

"O, come, let us sing unto the Lord:
Let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation. . . .
For the Lord is a great God,
And a great King above all gods.

In His hand are the deep places of the earth:
The strength of the hills is His also.
The sea is His, and He made it:
And His hands formed the dry land.

O come let us worship and bow down:
Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.
For He is our God."

"It is He that hath made us, and we are His;
We are His people, and the sheep of His pasture."
Psalm 95:1-7; 100:3, R.V. {6T 351.2}

These promises given to Israel are also for God's people today. They are the messages which the Sabbath brings to us.

Reform in Sabbath Observance

The Sabbath is a golden clasp that unites God and His people. But the Sabbath command has been broken. God's holy day has been desecrated. The Sabbath has [352] been torn from its place by the man of sin, and a common working day has been exalted in its stead. A breach has been made in the law, and this breach is to be repaired. The true Sabbath is to be exalted to its rightful position as God's rest day. In the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah is outlined the work which God's people are to do. They are to magnify the law and make it honorable, to build up the old waste places, and to raise up the foundations of many generations. To those who do this work God says: "Thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Verses 12-14. {6T 351.4}

The Sabbath question is to be the issue in the great final conflict in which all the world will act a part. Men have honored Satan's principles above the principles that rule in the heavens. They have accepted the spurious sabbath, which Satan has exalted as the sign of his authority. But God has set His seal upon His royal requirement. **Each sabbath institution bears the name of its author, an ineffaceable mark that shows the authority of each. It is our work to lead the people to understand this.** We are to show them that it is of vital consequence whether they bear the mark of God's kingdom or the mark of the kingdom of rebellion, for they acknowledge themselves subjects of the kingdom whose mark they bear. **God has called us to uplift the standard of His downtrodden Sabbath.**

How important, then, [353] that our example in Sabbathkeeping should be right.

In establishing new churches, ministers should give careful instruction as to the proper observance of the Sabbath. We must be guarded, lest the lax practices that prevail among Sundaykeepers shall be followed by those who profess to observe God's holy rest day. The line of demarcation is to be made clear and distinct between those who bear the mark of God's kingdom and those who bear the sign of the kingdom of rebellion.

Far more sacredness is attached to the Sabbath than is given it by many professed Sabbathkeepers. The Lord has been greatly dishonored by those who have not kept the Sabbath according to the commandment, either in the letter or in the spirit. He calls for a reform in the observance of the Sabbath.

Preparation for the Sabbath

At the very beginning of the fourth commandment the Lord said: "Remember." He knew that amid the multitude of cares and perplexities man would be tempted to excuse himself from meeting the full requirement of the law, or would forget its sacred importance. Therefore He said: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." Exodus 20:8.

All through the week we are to have the Sabbath in mind and be making preparation to keep it according to the commandment. We are not merely to observe the Sabbath as a legal matter. We are to understand its spiritual bearing upon all the transactions of life. All who regard the Sabbath as a sign between them and God, showing that He is the God who sanctifies them, will represent the principles of His government. They will bring into daily practice the laws of His kingdom. **Daily it will be their prayer that the sanctification of the Sabbath may rest upon them. Every day they will have [354] the companionship of**

Christ and will exemplify the perfection of His character. Every day their light will shine forth to others in good works.

In all that pertains to the success of God's work, the very first victories are to be won in the home life. Here the preparation for the Sabbath must begin. Throughout the week let parents remember that their home is to be a school in which their children shall be prepared for the courts above. Let their words be right words. **No words which their children should not hear are to escape their lips. Let the spirit be kept free from irritation.** Parents, during the week live as in the sight of a holy God, who has given you children to train for Him. Train for Him the little church in your home, that on the Sabbath all may be prepared to worship in the Lord's sanctuary. **Each morning and evening present your children to God as His blood-bought heritage. Teach them that it is their highest duty and privilege to love and serve God.**

Parents should be particular to make the worship of God an object lesson for their children. Passages of Scripture should be more often on their lips, especially those passages that prepare the heart for religious service. **The precious words might well be often repeated: "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from Him."** Psalm 62:5.

When the Sabbath is thus remembered, the temporal will not be allowed to encroach upon the spiritual. No duty pertaining to the six working days will be left for the Sabbath. **During the week our energies will not be so exhausted in temporal labor that on the day when the Lord rested and was refreshed we shall be too weary to engage in His service.**

While preparation for the Sabbath is to be made all through the week, **Friday is to be the special preparation day.** Through Moses the Lord said to the children of [355] Israel: "Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake today, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning." "And the people went about, and gathered it [the manna], and

ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it." Exodus 16:23; Numbers 11:8. There was something to be done in preparing the heaven-sent bread for the children of Israel. The Lord told them that this work must be done on Friday, the preparation day. This was a test to them. God desired to see whether or not they would keep the Sabbath holy.

This direction from the lips of Jehovah is for our instruction. The Bible is a perfect guide, and if its pages are prayerfully studied by hearts willing to understand, none need err upon this question. Many need instruction as to how they should appear in the assembly for worship on the Sabbath. They are not to enter the presence of God in the common clothing worn during the week. All should have a special Sabbath suit, to be worn when attending service in God's house. While we should not conform to worldly fashions, we are not to be indifferent in regard to our outward appearance. We are to be neat and trim, though without adornment. The children of God should be pure within and without.

On Friday let the preparation for the Sabbath be completed. See that all the clothing is in readiness and that all the cooking is done. Let the boots be blacked and the baths be taken. It is possible to do this. If you make it a rule you can do it. **The Sabbath is not to be given to the repairing of garments, to the cooking of food, to pleasure seeking, or to any other worldly employment.** Before the setting of the sun let all secular work be laid aside and all secular papers be put out of sight. Parents, [356] explain your work and its purpose to your children, and let them share in your preparation to keep the Sabbath according to the commandment.

We should jealously guard the edges of the Sabbath. Remember that every moment is consecrated, holy time. Whenever it is possible, employers should give their workers the hours from Friday noon until the beginning of the Sabbath. Give them time for preparation, that they may welcome the Lord's day with quietness of mind. By such a course you will suffer no loss even in temporal things.

There is another work that should receive attention on the preparation day. On this day all differences between brethren, whether in the family or in the church, should be put away. Let all bitterness and wrath and malice be expelled from the soul. In a humble spirit, "confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." James 5:16.

Before the Sabbath begins, the mind as well as the body should be withdrawn from worldly business. God has set His Sabbath at the end of the six working days, that men may stop and consider what they have gained during the week in preparation for the pure kingdom which admits no transgressor. We should each Sabbath reckon with our souls to see whether the week that has ended has brought spiritual gain or loss.

It means eternal salvation to keep the Sabbath holy unto the Lord. God says: "Them that honor Me I will honor." 1 Samuel 2:30.

The Sabbath in the Home

Before the setting of the sun let the members of the family assemble to read God's word, to sing and pray. There is need of reform here, for many have been remiss. We need to confess to God and to one another. [357] We should begin anew to make special arrangements that every member of the family may be prepared to honor the day which God has blessed and sanctified.

Let not the precious hours of the Sabbath be wasted in bed. On Sabbath morning the family should be astir early. If they rise late, there is confusion and bustle in preparing for breakfast and Sabbath school. **There is hurrying, jostling, and impatience. Thus unholy feelings come into the home. The Sabbath, thus desecrated, becomes a weariness, and its coming is dreaded rather than loved.**

We should not provide for the Sabbath a more liberal supply or a greater variety of food than for other days. Instead of this the food should be more simple, and less should be eaten, in order that the mind may be clear and vigorous to comprehend spiritual things. Overeating befogs the brain. The most precious words may be heard and not appreciated, because the mind is confused by an improper diet. By overeating on the Sabbath, many have done more than they think to dishonor God. {6T 357.2}

While cooking upon the Sabbath should be avoided, it is not necessary to eat cold food. In cold weather let the food prepared the day before be heated. And let the meals, though simple, be palatable and attractive. **Provide something that will be regarded as a treat, something the family do not have every day.** {6T 357.3}

At family worship let the children take a part. Let all bring their Bibles and each read a verse or two. Then let some familiar hymn be sung, followed by prayer. For this, Christ has given a model. The Lord's Prayer was not intended to be repeated merely as a form, but it is an illustration of what our prayers should be--simple, earnest, and comprehensive. In a simple petition tell the Lord your needs and express gratitude for His mercies. Thus you invite Jesus as a welcome guest into your home [358] and heart. **In the family long prayers concerning remote objects are not in place.** They make the hour of prayer a weariness, when it should be regarded as a privilege and blessing. Make the season one of interest and joy.

The Sabbath school and the meeting for worship occupy only a part of the Sabbath. The portion remaining to the family may be made the most sacred and precious season of all the Sabbath hours. Much of this time parents should spend with their children. **In many families the younger children are left to themselves to find entertainment as best they can. Left alone, the children soon become restless and begin to play or**

engage in some kind of mischief. Thus the Sabbath has to them no sacred significance.

In pleasant weather let parents walk with their children in the fields and groves. Amid the beautiful things of nature tell them the reason for the institution of the Sabbath. Describe to them God's great work of creation. Tell them that when the earth came from His hand, it was holy and beautiful. Every flower, every shrub, every tree, answered the purpose of its Creator. Everything upon which the eye rested was lovely and filled the mind with thoughts of the love of God. Every sound was music in harmony with the voice of God. Show that it was sin which marred God's perfect work; that thorns and thistles, sorrow and pain and death, are all the result of disobedience to God. Bid them see how the earth, though marred with the curse of sin, still reveals God's goodness. The green fields, the lofty trees, the glad sunshine, the clouds, the dew, the solemn stillness of the night, the glory of the starry heavens, and the moon in its beauty all bear witness of the Creator. Not a drop of rain falls, not a ray of light is shed on our unthankful world, but it testifies to the forbearance and love of God.

Tell them of the way of salvation; how "God so loved [359]the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. Let the sweet story of Bethlehem be repeated. Present before the children Jesus, as a child obedient to His parents, as a youth faithful and industrious, helping to support the family. Thus you can teach them that the Saviour knows the trials, perplexities, and temptations, the hopes and joys, of the young, and that He can give them sympathy and help. From time to time read with them the interesting stories in Bible history. Question as to what they have learned in the Sabbath school, and study with them the next Sabbath's lesson.

As the sun goes down, let the voice of prayer and the hymn of praise mark the close of the sacred hours and invite God's presence through the cares of the week of labor.

Thus parents can make the Sabbath, as it should be, the most joyful day of the week. They can lead their children to regard it as a delight, the day of days, the holy of the Lord, honorable.

I counsel you, my brethren and sisters: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." If you desire your children to observe the Sabbath according to the commandment, you must teach them by both precept and example. The deep engraving of truth in the heart is never wholly effaced. It may be obscured, but can never be obliterated. The impressions made in early life will be seen in after years. Circumstances may occur to separate the children from their parents and their home, but as long as they live the instruction given in childhood and youth will be a blessing.

Traveling on the Sabbath

If we desire the blessing promised to the obedient, we must observe the Sabbath more strictly. I fear that we [360] often travel on this day when it might be avoided. In harmony with the light which the Lord has given in regard to the observance of the Sabbath, we should be more careful about traveling on the boats or cars on this day. In these matters we should set a right example before our children and youth. In order to reach the churches that need our help, and to give them the message that God desires them to hear, it may be necessary for us to travel on the Sabbath; but so far as possible we should secure our tickets and make all necessary arrangements on some other day. When starting on a journey we should make every possible effort to plan so as to avoid reaching our destination on the Sabbath.

When compelled to travel on the Sabbath we should try to avoid the company of those who would draw our attention to worldly things. We should keep our minds stayed upon God and commune with Him. Whenever there is opportunity we should speak to others in regard to the truth. We should always be ready to relieve suffering and to help those in need. In such cases God desires that the knowledge and wisdom He has given us should be put to use. But we should not talk about matters of business or engage in any common, worldly conversation. At all times and in all places God requires us to prove our loyalty to Him by honoring the Sabbath.

Sabbath Meetings

Christ has said: "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." Matthew 18:20. **Wherever there are as many as two or three believers, let them meet together on the Sabbath to claim the Lord's promise.**

The little companies assembled to worship God on His holy day have a right to claim the rich blessing of Jehovah. They should believe that the Lord Jesus is [361] an honored guest in their assemblies. Every true worshiper who keeps holy the Sabbath should claim the promise: "That ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." Exodus 31:13.

The preaching at our Sabbath meetings should generally be short. Opportunity should be given for those who love God to express their gratitude and adoration.

When the church is without a minister, someone should be appointed as leader of the meeting. But it is not necessary for him to preach a sermon or to occupy a large part of the time of service. A short, interesting Bible reading will often be of greater benefit than a sermon. And this can be followed by a meeting for prayer and testimony.

Those who occupy a leading position in the church should not exhaust their physical and mental strength through the week so that on the Sabbath they are unable to bring the vivifying influence of the gospel of Christ into the meeting. Do less temporal, everyday labor, but do not rob God by giving Him, on the Sabbath, service which He cannot accept. You should not be as men who have no spiritual life. **The people need your help on the Sabbath. Give them food from the word.** Bring your choicest gifts to God on His holy day. Let the precious life of the soul be given to Him in consecrated service.

Let none come to the place of worship to take a nap. There should be no sleeping in the house of God. You do not fall asleep when engaged in your temporal business, because you have an interest in your work. Shall we allow the service which involves eternal interests to be placed on a lower level than the temporal affairs of life?

When we do this we miss the blessing which the Lord designs us to have. The Sabbath is not to be a day of useless idleness. Both in the home and in the church [362] a spirit of service is to be manifested. He who gave us six days for our temporal work has blessed and sanctified the seventh day and set it apart for Himself. On this day He will in a special manner bless all who consecrate themselves to His service.

All heaven is keeping the Sabbath, but not in a listless, do-nothing way. On this day every energy of the soul should be awake, for are we not to meet with God and with Christ our Saviour? We may behold Him by faith. He is longing to refresh and bless every soul.

Everyone should feel that he has a part to act in making the Sabbath meetings interesting. You are not to come together simply as a matter of form, but for the interchange of thought, for the relation of your daily experiences, for the expression of thanksgiving, for the utterance of your sincere desire for divine enlightenment, that you may know God, and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent. Communing together in regard to Christ

will strengthen the soul for life's trials and conflicts. Never think that you can be Christians and yet withdraw yourselves within yourselves. Each one is a part of the great web of humanity, and the experience of each will be largely determined by the experience of his associates.

We do not obtain a hundredth part of the blessing we should obtain from assembling together to worship God. Our perceptive faculties need sharpening. Fellowship with one another should make us glad. With such a hope as we have, why are not our hearts all aglow with the love of God?

We must carry to every religious gathering a quickened spiritual consciousness that God and His angels are there, co-operating with all true worshipers. As you enter the place of worship, ask the Lord to remove all evil from your heart. **Bring to His house only that which He can bless. Kneel before God in His temple, and consecrate to [363] Him His own, which He has purchased with the blood of Christ. Pray for the speaker or the leader of the meeting. Pray that great blessing may come through the one who is to hold forth the word of life. Strive earnestly to lay hold of a blessing for yourself.**

God will bless all who thus prepare themselves for His service. They will understand what it means to have the assurance of the Spirit because they have received Christ by faith.

The place of worship may be very humble, but it is no less acknowledged by God. To those who worship God in spirit and in truth and in the beauty of holiness it will be as the gate of heaven. The company of believers may be few in number, but in God's sight they are very precious. By the cleaver of truth they have been taken as rough stones from the quarry of the world and have been brought into the workshop of God to be hewed and shaped. But even in the rough they are precious in the sight of God. The ax, the hammer, and the chisel of trial are in the hands of One who is skillful; they are used, not to destroy, but to work out the perfection of every soul. As precious stones, polished after the

similitude of a palace, God designs us to find a place in the heavenly temple.

God's appointments and grants in our behalf are without limit. The throne of grace is itself the highest attraction because occupied by One who permits us to call Him Father. But God did not deem the principle of salvation complete while invested only with His own love. By His appointment He has placed at His altar an Advocate clothed with our nature. As our Intercessor, His office work is to introduce us to God as His sons and daughters. Christ intercedes in behalf of those who have received Him. To them He gives power, by virtue of His own merits, to become members of the royal family, [364] children of the heavenly King. **And the Father demonstrates His infinite love for Christ, who paid our ransom with His blood, by receiving and welcoming Christ's friends as His friends. He is satisfied with the atonement made. He is glorified by the incarnation, the life, death, and mediation of His Son.**

No sooner does the child of God approach the mercy seat than he becomes the client of the great Advocate. At his first utterance of penitence and appeal for pardon Christ espouses his case and makes it His own, presenting the supplication before the Father as His own request.

As Christ intercedes in our behalf, the Father lays open all the treasures of His grace for our appropriation, to be enjoyed and to be communicated to others. "Ask in My name," "Christ says; "I do not say that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father Himself loveth you, because you have loved Me. Make use of My name. This will give your prayers efficiency, and the Father will give you the riches of His grace; wherefore, 'ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.'" John 16:24.

God desires His obedient children to claim His blessing and to come before Him with praise and thanksgiving. **God is the Fountain of life and power. He can make the wilderness a fruitful field for the people that keep His commandments, for this is for the glory of His name.** He has

done for His chosen people that which should inspire every heart with thanksgiving, and it grieves Him that so little praise is offered. He desires to have a stronger expression from His people, showing that they know they have reason for joy and gladness.

The dealings of God with His people should be often repeated. How frequently were the waymarks set up by the Lord in His dealings with ancient Israel! Lest they should forget the history of the past, He commanded Moses to frame these events into song, that parents might [365] teach them to their children. **They were to gather up memorials and to lay them up in sight. Special pains were taken to preserve them, that when the children should inquire concerning these things, the whole story might be repeated.** Thus the providential dealings and the marked goodness and mercy of God in His care and deliverance of His people were kept in mind. We are exhorted to call to "remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions." Hebrews 10:32. For His people in this generation the Lord has wrought as a wonder-working God. The past history of the cause of God needs to be often brought before the people, young and old. We need often to recount God's goodness and to praise Him for His wonderful works.

While we are exhorted not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, these assemblies are not to be merely for our own refreshing. We are to be inspired with greater zeal to impart the consolation we have received. It is our duty to be very jealous for the glory of God and to bring no evil report, even by the sadness of the countenance or by ill-advised words, as if the requirements of God were a restriction upon our liberty. Even in this world of sorrow, disappointment, and sin the Lord desires us to be cheerful, and strong in His strength. The whole person is privileged to bear a decided testimony in every line. In features, in temper, in words, in character, we are to witness that the service of God is good. Thus we proclaim that "the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Psalm 19:7.

The bright and cheerful side of our religion will be represented by all who are daily consecrated to God. **We should not dishonor God by the mournful relation of trials that appear grievous. All trials that are received as educators will produce joy.** The whole religious life [366] be uplifting, elevating, ennobling, fragrant with good words and works. **The enemy is well pleased to have souls depressed, downcast, mourning and groaning;** he wants just such impressions made as to the effect of our faith. But God designs that the mind shall take no low level. He desires every soul to triumph in the keeping power of the Redeemer. The psalmist says: "Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." I will extol Thee, O Lord; for Thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me. O Lord my God, I cried unto Thee, and Thou hast healed me. . . . Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of His, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness." Psalm 29:1, 2; 30:1-4.

The church of God below is one with the church of God above. Believers on the earth and the beings in heaven who have never fallen constitute one church. Every heavenly intelligence is interested in the assemblies of the saints who on earth meet to worship God. In the inner court of heaven they listen to the testimony of the witnesses for Christ in the outer court on earth, and the praise and thanksgiving from the worshipers below is taken up in the heavenly anthem, and praise and rejoicing sound through the heavenly courts because Christ has not died in vain for the fallen sons of Adam. While angels drink from the fountainhead, the saints on earth drink of the pure streams flowing from the throne, the streams that make glad the city of our God. Oh, that we could all realize the nearness of heaven to earth! When the earthborn children know it not, they have angels of light as their companions. A silent witness guards every soul that lives, seeking to draw that soul to Christ. **As long as there is hope, until men resist the Holy Spirit to [367] their eternal ruin, they are guarded by heavenly intelligences. Let us all**

bear in mind that in every assembly of the saints below are angels of God, listening to the testimonies, songs, and prayers. Let us remember that our praises are supplemented by the choirs of the angelic host above.

Then as you meet from Sabbath to Sabbath, sing praises to Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood" let the heart's adoration be given. Let the love of Christ be the burden of the speaker's utterance. Let it be expressed in simple language in every song of praise. Let the inspiration of the Spirit of God dictate your prayers. As the word of life is spoken, let your heartfelt response testify that you receive the message as from heaven. This is very old-fashioned, I know; but it will be a thank offering to God for the bread of life given to the hungry soul. This response to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit will be a strength to your own soul and an encouragement to others. It will give some evidence that there are in God's building living stones that emit light.

While we review, not the dark chapters in our experience, but the manifestations of God's great mercy and unfailing love, we shall praise far more than complain. We shall talk of the loving faithfulness of God as the true, tender, compassionate shepherd of His flock, which He has declared that none shall pluck out of His hand. The language of the heart will not be selfish murmuring and repining. Praise, like clear-flowing streams, will come from God's truly believing ones. "Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there [368] is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee." Psalm 23:6; 73:24, 25.

Why not awake the voice of our spiritual songs in the travels of our pilgrimage? Why not come back to our simplicity and life of fervor? The reason why we are not more joyful is that we have lost our first love. Let

us then be zealous and repent, lest the candlestick be moved out of its place.

The temple of God is opened in heaven, and the threshold is flushed with the glory which is for every church that will love God and keep His commandments. We need to study, to meditate, and to pray. Then we shall have spiritual eyesight to discern the inner courts of the celestial temple. We shall catch the themes of song and thanksgiving of the heavenly choir round about the throne. When Zion shall arise and shine, her light will be most penetrating, and precious songs of praise and thanksgiving will be heard in the assemblies of the saints. Murmuring and complaining over little disappointments and difficulties will cease. As we apply the golden eyesalve we shall see the glories beyond. Faith will cut through the heavy shadow of Satan, and we shall see our Advocate offering up the incense of His own merits in our behalf. When we see this as it is, as the Lord desires us to see it, we shall be filled with a sense of the immensity and diversity of the love of God.

God teaches that we should assemble in His house to cultivate the attributes of perfect love. This will fit the dwellers of earth for the mansions that Christ has gone to prepare for all who love Him. There they will assemble in the sanctuary from Sabbath to Sabbath, from one new moon to another, to unite in loftiest strains of song, in praise and thanksgiving to Him who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.