

## **Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes**

### **Second Quarter 2020: *How to Interpret Scripture***

#### **Lesson 1 “The Uniqueness of the Bible”**

#### **Read for this week’s study**

Deuteronomy 32:45–47; Genesis 49:8–12; Isaiah 53:3–7; 1 Corinthians 15:3–5, 51–55; Romans 12:2.

#### **Memory Text**

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (Psalm 119:105, NKJV).

#### **Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide**

- I. Introduction
- II. The Living Word of God
- III. Who Wrote the Bible, and Where?
- IV. The Bible as Prophecy
- V. The Bible as History
- VI. The Transforming Power of the Word
- VII. Further Study

#### **Questions and Notes for Consideration**

##### **Facilitator: Jon Paulien**

1. Having the Bible and claiming to believe it is a good starting point. But most false doctrines claim to be derived, in part, from Scripture. So sound interpretation of the Bible is extremely important as well. On what basis within Scripture do we determine just how the Bible should be read? (Sabbath afternoon)
2. Read Psalm 119:105. What does this text tell us about the way the Bible communicates truth? The lesson authors tell us that “the Bible is unique.” Do you agree with that statement? Why or why not? In what ways is the Bible unique? (Sabbath afternoon)
3. Read Deuteronomy 32:45-47. How does Moses describe the Word of God and its power in the lives of the Hebrews on the verge of entering the Promised Land? Read John 1:1-5, 14; 14:6. What do these texts teach us about the meaning of “the Word of God”? (Sunday’s lesson)
4. What do the following texts tell us about the biblical writers and their backgrounds (Exodus 2:10; Amos 7:14; Jeremiah 1:1-6; Daniel 6:1-5; Matthew 9:9; Philippians 3:3-6; Revelation 1:9)? There are so many different writers and contexts in the Bible?

What does this tell us about God and the way He seeks to communicate with us?  
(Monday's lesson)

5. How do the following texts reveal the details of the coming Messiah (Genesis 49:8-12; Psalm 22:12-18; Isaiah 53:3-7; Daniel 9:2-27; Micah 5:2; Malachi 3:1; Zechariah 9:9)? If the messianic prophecies are as clear as most Christians think, why is it that most Jews don't see that clarity? (Tuesday's lesson)
6. Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-5, 51-55; Romans 8:11; and 1 Thessalonians 4:14. What do these passages teach us about Christ's resurrection and our own? Why is the promise of the resurrection so central to our faith and life? (Wednesday's lesson)
7. Read 2 Kings 22:3-20 in context (2 Kings 21:3-9). What causes King Josiah to tear his clothes? How does this discovery change both the king and the nation? Read John 16:13, 17:17, Hebrews 4:12 and Romans 12:2. How does the Bible assure us that it has the power to change our life and show us the way to salvation? How do we balance the divine and the human elements of Scripture in interpretation? (Thursday's lesson)
8. In what way does prophecy confirm the Bible's divine origin? How does fulfilled prophecy underline also the human element of Scripture? (Friday's lesson)

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

First of all, let's consider very briefly what we sometimes take a whole year to do when students are specializing in this subject. Let's consider the question: Do we have the right collection of sixty-six books? Some Bibles have many more than that. If you are carrying with you tonight the *New American Bible*, the *Jerusalem Bible*, or some printings of the *New English Bible*, even the *King James*, you will find that there are extra books, most particularly in English translations of the Bible (and of course in any other language) used by our Roman Catholic friends. They will have about a dozen more books in the Old Testament; not in the middle, but scattered through. Now what do you do when you are visiting a friend who has a Bible with these extra books and that individual has confidence that his or her Bible is the inspired word of God? Are you going to say, "Well, your version is not inspired but mine is?" Would it help to use that first key text on the Bible Reference Sheet, 2 Timothy 3:16? It has been used in this way through the years, but does it clear up this question? "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching. . . ."

Does that settle the question? What books are being referred to as all scripture? Well, suppose we use our *King James Version*. There is that verse "All scripture," right in this heavy twenty pound one. "All scripture is inspired of God," and do you know what is in the middle of this twenty pound Bible? All those extra books that are in the Roman Catholic Bibles. The *King James Version* always contained the books of the Apocrypha. In fact they remained there until

1827. That's almost two hundred years, until the British and Foreign Bible Societies decided that they didn't have the funds to continue circulating those Apocryphal books.

It was Luther who first gathered those books together and put them in the middle. When he translated his influential German Bible that had so much to do with the rise of the reformation, he was translating from the original. And as a Roman Catholic himself, knowing the Latin, he had to decide whether or not to include those extra books that were scattered through his Old Testament. He gathered them together and put them in the middle with an interesting notice: "These books are interesting and useful to read but not for doctrine." Then when he turned his attention to the New Testament, you remember, he came to four books that he couldn't fit in there too well. He didn't call them Apocryphal, just of less authority because they "didn't teach Christ." Hebrews, James, Jude and Revelation he put at the end, where they remain to this day in German Bibles. Of course if you are in a Roman Catholic home, your Catholic friend may say, "Well, my Bible has that verse. All scripture is inspired of God and this is my scripture and therefore that verse proves the inspiration of the Apocrypha." That's official, by the way.

That is why it is so important to know that the Greek of that verse can be translated another way, and I believe the context dictates that it be so translated. Look at the second rendering that's on the Bible Reference Sheet from the *New English Bible*. Many versions agree. "Every inspired scripture has its use for teaching the truth. . . ." (NEB)

An un-inspired scripture is something else. You see, it is very likely that Timothy's Bible was the Greek Old Testament which contained these extra books. And that's why Paul had to say to Timothy, "Timothy, you have many books in your possession, but only that scripture which is inspired of God is profitable. . . ."

It is helpful to notice the total context there. See the next paragraph on the Bible Reference Sheet? In 2 Timothy 3:14-17 Paul wrote to that young Pastor:

But for your part, stand by the truths you have learned and are assured of. Remember from whom you learned them; remember that from early childhood you have been familiar with the sacred writings [now writings, scriptures—same word], which have power to make you wise and lead you to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. Every inspired scripture [Timothy, and you know what I mean] has its use for teaching the truth and refuting error, or for reformation of manners and discipline in right living, so that the man who belongs to God may be efficient and equipped for good work of every kind.

Now to orthodox Jews, the ones who had the Bible first, there were only the thirty-nine with which most of us are familiar. Sometimes they counted them as twenty-four or sometimes as twenty-two; they would combine them together. It all began with Moses and the first five. When the man who had been up on Mt. Sinai came down carrying the Ten Commandments,

with his face shining so brightly they couldn't even look at him; when he said, "I am giving you some dependable messages from the Lord," there was every reason to accept those, to take them seriously. So they built up a collection of the first five books. They became known as the *Law; the Law of Moses*. They became a standard; or the rule, or even the canon.

Then as later books came along written by other prophets, they were all measured by the first standard: *The Law*. Until by and by we had *The Law and the Prophets*. And then other writings came along known as *The Writings, The Holy Writings, or The Psalms*. These were compared with *The Prophets* and with *The Law*, until finally there were the thirty-nine, divided into three canons: *The Law, The Prophets* and *The Writings, or The Law, The Prophets* and *The Psalms*, since Psalms was number one in the third canon. Sometimes *The Law, The Prophets* and the *Hagiographa*, that is *The Holy Writings*. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #5, "The Record of the Evidence" recorded February, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/5MMCAG>*

Lou: I've wondered, and someone might well be asking, does your church, the Seventh-day Adventist church, have an official version?

Graham: I think some have rather wished so. But it speaks well of our worldwide outlook that we say we cannot limit ourselves. We've gone on record this way. We wish to share the picture of God with every person under heaven, in all the languages of earth. So how can we have one official translation? There's only one thing that could be official, and that's the original: The Hebrew, the Aramaic, and the Greek, from which all translations come, ultimately. But we're prepared to go to the world in any version, any translation. And that's why I like to relax when I'm in someone else's home and say, "which Bible do you have there? Let's use yours." {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #5 with Lou Venden, "The Record of the Evidence" recorded February, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/5MMCAG>*

The Bible is very candid in its depiction and description of sin. But it always presents sin in the setting of the remedy. Otherwise the Bible would not be fit to read. But that's why we must read it as a whole. Do you know that there are two books in the Bible that don't even mention God? Not once. But if you take the whole book and put it in the larger setting, those two books, Esther and Song of Solomon, say wonderful things about our God. You see, to be fair with the evidence we must read it as a whole. Or maybe could I read the statement I wrote at the

bottom of the Bible Reference Sheet? After going through 108 times, this is my firmest conviction about the Bible:

The great purpose of the Bible is to reveal the truth about our heavenly Father that we may be won back to him in love and trust. This truth, this everlasting good news, is to be found in every one of the sixty-six books. But to discover this truth we must learn more than just what happened to Samson and Delilah, to David and Bathsheba, to Gideon and his fleece. The all-important question is, what do these stories tell us about God?

If one does not ask this question, much of the content of scripture may seem unrelated to the plan of salvation, even perplexing, sometimes even contradictory. But when one learns to view the Bible as a whole, there emerges a consistent picture of an all-wise and gracious God who seems willing to go to any length to keep in touch with his people, to stoop and reach them where they are, to speak a language they can understand. And the further one reads on book by book, the more one is moved with love and admiration for a God who would be willing to run such risk, to pay such a price, in order to keep open the lines of communication between himself and his wayward children. God will save all who trust him. But he has not asked us to trust him as a stranger. The Bible—all of it—is a record of God’s revelation and demonstration of infinite trustworthiness. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #6, “Evaluating the Evidence” recorded February, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:*

<http://pkp.cc/6MMCAG>

We even sing, “There’s power in the Word,” and almost treat the Bible as if it had magical power. I remember Jesus’ words, “You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life.” There’s no life in the Book. The Book has power because it witnesses to the truth about the one who has the power. Only God saves. The Bible doesn’t save. Now, if we think the Bible has power, we call it *bibliolatry*. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #6, “Evaluating the Evidence” recorded February, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* <http://pkp.cc/6MMCAG>

### **Recommended Listening:**

Conversations About God #5 “The Record of the Evidence” is available at: <http://pkp.cc/5MMCAG>

Conversations About God #6 “Evaluating the Evidence” is available at: <http://pkp.cc/6MMCAG>

## Further Study with Ellen White

Since God is infinite, and in Him are all the treasures of wisdom, we may to all eternity be ever searching, ever learning, yet never exhaust the riches of His wisdom, His goodness, or His power. {Ed 172.2}

The Bible is its own expositor. One passage will prove to be a key that will unlock other passages, and in this way light will be shed upon the hidden meaning of the word. By comparing different texts treating on the same subject, viewing their bearing on every side, the true meaning of the Scriptures will be made evident. {FE 187.2}

In giving us this word, God has put us in possession of every truth essential to salvation. Thousands have drawn water from these wells of life, yet there is no diminishing of the supply. Thousands have set the Lord before them, and by beholding have become changed into the same image. But these searchers have not exhausted these grand and holy themes. Thousands more may engage in the work of searching out the mysteries of salvation. {GW 250.4}

The Bible is its own interpreter. With beautiful simplicity one portion connects itself with the truth of another portion, until the whole Bible is blended in one harmonious whole. Light flashes forth from one text to illuminate some portion of the Word that has seemed more obscure. {OHC 207.5}

Christ alone was able to represent the Deity. He who had been in the presence of the Father from the beginning, He who was the express image of the invisible God, was alone sufficient to accomplish this work. No verbal description could reveal God to the world. Through a life of purity, a life of perfect trust and submission to the will of God, a life of humiliation such as even the highest seraph in heaven would have shrunk from, God Himself must be revealed to humanity. In order to do this, our Saviour clothed His divinity with humanity. He employed the human faculties, for only by adopting these could He be comprehended by humanity. Only humanity could reach humanity. He lived out the character of God through the human body which God had prepared for Him. He blessed the world by living out in human flesh the life of God, thus showing that He had the power to unite humanity to divinity (RH June 25, 1895). {7BC 924.6}

In the creation of man was manifest the agency of a personal God. When God had made man in His image, the human form was perfect in all its arrangements, but it was without life. Then a personal, self-existing God breathed into that form the breath of life, and man became a living, intelligent being. All parts of the human organism were set in action. The heart, the arteries, the veins, the tongue, the hands, the feet, the senses, the faculties of the mind, all began their work, and all were placed under law. Man became a living soul. Through Christ the Word, a personal God created man and endowed him with intelligence and power. {MH 415.1}

Jesus was the Commander of heaven, one equal with God, and yet He condescended to lay aside His kingly crown, His royal robe, and clothed His divinity with humanity. The incarnation of Christ in human flesh is a mystery. He could have come to earth as one with a remarkable appearance, unlike the sons of men. His countenance could have shone with glory, and His form could have been of remarkable grace. He could have presented such an appearance as to charm the beholder; but this was not according to the plan devised in the courts of God. He was to bear the characteristics of the human family, and the Jewish race. In all respects the Son of God was to wear the same features as did other human beings. He was not to have such beauty of person as would make Him singular among men. He was to manifest no wonderful charms by which to attract attention to Himself. He came as a representative of the human family before heaven and earth. He was to stand as man's substitute and surety. He was to live the life of humanity in such a way as to contradict the assertion that Satan had made that humanity was his everlasting possession, and that God Himself could not take man out of His adversary's hands (ST July 30, 1896). {5BC 1130.8}

Had Christ come in His divine form, humanity could not have endured the sight. The contrast would have been too painful, the glory too overwhelming. Humanity could not have endured the presence of one of the pure, bright angels from glory; therefore Christ took not on Him the nature of angels; He came in the likeness of men. {5BC 1131.1}

What speech is to thought, so is Christ to the invisible Father. He is the manifestation of the Father, and is called the Word of God. God sent His Son into the world, His divinity clothed with humanity, that man might bear the image of the invisible God. He made known in His words, His character, His power and majesty, the nature and attributes of God. Divinity flashed through humanity in softening, subduing light. He was the embodiment of the law of God, which is the transcript of His character (MS 77, 1899). {5BC 1131.6}

And while Christ opens heaven to man, the life which He imparts opens the heart of man to heaven. Sin not only shuts us away from God, but destroys in the human soul both the desire and the capacity for knowing Him. All this work of evil it is Christ's mission to undo. The faculties of the soul, paralyzed by sin, the darkened mind, the perverted will, He has power to invigorate and to restore. He opens to us the riches of the universe, and by Him the power to discern and to appropriate these treasures is imparted. {Ed 28.3}

The Son of God came to this earth to reveal the character of the Father to men, that they might learn to worship Him in spirit and in truth. He came to sow the world with truth. He held the keys of all the treasures of wisdom, and was able to open doors to science, and to reveal undiscovered stores of knowledge, were it essential to salvation. The Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, every phase of truth was evident to Him. {CT 28.2}

Satan has ascribed to God all the evils to which flesh is heir. He has represented Him as a God who delights in the sufferings of His creatures, who is revengeful and implacable. It was Satan who originated the doctrine of eternal torment as a punishment for sin, because in this way he could lead men into infidelity and rebellion, distract souls, and dethrone the human reason. {FE 176.2}

Heaven, looking down, and seeing the delusions into which men were led, knew that a divine Instructor must come to earth. Men in ignorance and moral darkness must have light, spiritual light; for the world knew not God, and He must be revealed to their understanding. Truth looked down from heaven and saw not the reflection of her image; for dense clouds of moral darkness and gloom enveloped the world, and the Lord Jesus alone was able to roll back the clouds: for He was the Light of the world. By His presence He could dissipate the gloomy shadow that Satan had cast between man and God. Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. Through the accumulated misrepresentations of the enemy, many were so deceived that they worshiped a false god, clothed with the attributes of the satanic character. {FE 176.3}

The Teacher from heaven, no less a personage than the Son of God, came to earth to reveal the character of the Father to men, that they might worship Him in spirit and in truth. Christ revealed to men the fact that the strictest adherence to ceremony and form would not save them; for the kingdom of God was spiritual in its nature. Christ came to the world to sow it with truth. He held the keys to all the treasures of wisdom, and was able to open doors to science, and to reveal undiscovered stores of knowledge, were it essential to salvation. He presented to men that which was exactly contrary to the representations of the enemy in regard to the character of God, and sought to impress upon men the paternal love of the Father, who “so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” He urged upon men the necessity of prayer, repentance, confession, and the abandonment of sin. He taught them honesty, forbearance, mercy, and compassion, enjoining upon them to love not only those who loved them, but those who hated them, who treated them despitefully. In this He was revealing to them the character of the Father, who is long-suffering, merciful, and gracious, slow to anger, and full of goodness and truth. Those who accepted His teaching were under the guardian care of angels, who were commissioned to strengthen, to enlighten, that the truth might renew and sanctify the soul. {FE 177.1}

If we surrender our lives to His service, we can never be placed in a position for which God has not made provision. Whatever may be our situation, we have a Guide to direct our way; whatever our perplexities, we have a sure Counselor; whatever our sorrow, bereavement, or loneliness, we have a sympathizing Friend. If in our ignorance we make missteps, Christ does not leave us. His voice, clear and distinct, is heard saying, “I am the Way, the Truth, and the

Life.” John 14:6. “He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper.” Psalm 72:12. {COL 173.1}

Satan represents God’s law of love as a law of selfishness. He declares that it is impossible for us to obey its precepts. The fall of our first parents, with all the woe that has resulted, he charges upon the Creator, leading men to look upon God as the author of sin, and suffering, and death. Jesus was to unveil this deception. . . . {DA 24.2}

The heart of God yearns over His earthly children with a love stronger than death. In giving up His Son, He has poured out to us all heaven in one gift. The Saviour’s life and death and intercession, the ministry of angels, the pleading of the Spirit, the Father working above and through all, the unceasing interest of heavenly beings,—all are enlisted in behalf of man’s redemption. {SC 21.2}

The Son of God came to the world as a restorer. He was the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Every word He uttered was spirit and life. He spoke with authority, conscious of His power to bless humanity, and deliver the captives bound by Satan; conscious also that by His presence He could bring to the world fullness of joy. He longed to help every oppressed and suffering member of the human family, and show that it was His prerogative to bless, not to condemn. {LHU 37.2}

Having undertaken the work of man’s redemption, the Father would spare nothing, however dear, which was essential for the completion of His work. He would make opportunities for men; He would pour upon them His blessings; He would heap favor upon favor, gift upon gift, until the whole treasury of heaven was open to those whom He came to save. Having collected all the riches of the universe, and laid open all the resources of His divine nature, God gave them all for the use of man. They were His free gift. What an ocean of love is circulating, like a divine atmosphere, around the world! What manner of love is this, that the eternal God should adopt human nature in the person of His Son, and carry the same into the highest heaven! {TMK 19.2}

All the heavenly intelligences were watching with intense interest the warfare that was going on upon the earth—the earth that Satan claimed as his dominion. Every moment was big with eternal realities. How would the conflict end? The angels looked for the justice of God to be revealed, His anger to be aroused against the prince of darkness and his sympathizers. But lo, mercy prevailed. When the Son of God might have come to the world to condemn, He came as righteousness and peace, to save not merely the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but all the world—every son and daughter of Adam who would believe on Him, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. What an exhibition of the love of Jehovah! This is love without a parallel. {TMK 19.3}

His heart was constantly burning with the love that brought Him from heaven to our world. His goodness and His power enabled Him to reveal in His life the truth that He came to this earth to bring to the fallen race. In every word, in every act, He manifested the love of God, cheering and encouraging the downcast and distressed. In heavenly wisdom He asserted His true majesty by bending all things to the present and future happiness of human beings. He came to teach men and women how to live, here below, the life of which He gave them an example—the life that will make them fit to enter the abodes of bliss. {UL 229.3}

But notice here that obedience is not a mere outward compliance, but the service of love. The law of God is an expression of His very nature; it is an embodiment of the great principle of love, and hence is the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. If our hearts are renewed in the likeness of God, if the divine love is implanted in the soul, will not the law of God be carried out in the life? When the principle of love is implanted in the heart, when man is renewed after the image of Him that created him, the new-covenant promise is fulfilled, “I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.” Hebrews 10:16. And if the law is written in the heart, will it not shape the life? Obedience—the service and allegiance of love—is the true sign of discipleship. Thus the Scripture says, “This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.” “He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” 1 John 5:3; 2:4. Instead of releasing man from obedience, it is faith, and faith only, that makes us partakers of the grace of Christ, which enables us to render obedience. {SC 60.2}

But in heaven, service is not rendered in the spirit of legality. When Satan rebelled against the law of Jehovah, the thought that there was a law came to the angels almost as an awakening to something unthought of. In their ministry the angels are not as servants, but as sons. There is perfect unity between them and their Creator. Obedience is to them no drudgery. Love for God makes their service a joy. {MB 109.2}

Our will is not to be forced into co-operation with divine agencies, but it must be voluntarily submitted. Were it possible to force upon you with a hundredfold greater intensity the influence of the Spirit of God, it would not make you a Christian, a fit subject for heaven. The stronghold of Satan would not be broken. {MB 142.1}

A sullen submission to the will of the Father will develop the character of a rebel. The service is looked upon by such a one in the light of drudgery. It is not rendered cheerfully and in the love of God. It is a mere mechanical performance. . . . Such service brings no peace or quietude to the soul. {TMK 120.4}

The man who attempts to keep the commandments of God from a sense of obligation merely—because he is required to do so—will never enter into the joy of obedience. He does not obey. When the requirements of God are accounted a burden because they cut across human

inclination, we may know that the life is not a Christian life. True obedience is the outworking of a principle within. It springs from the love of righteousness, the love of the law of God. The essence of all righteousness is loyalty to our Redeemer. This will lead us to do right because it is right—because right doing is pleasing to God. {COL 97.3}

The Bible contains a simple and complete system of theology and philosophy. It is the book that makes us wise unto salvation. It tells us how to reach the abode of eternal happiness. It tells us of the love of God as shown in the plan of redemption, imparting the knowledge essential for all,—the knowledge of Christ. He is the Sent of God; he is the Author of our salvation. But apart from the Word of God, we could have no knowledge that such a person as the Lord Jesus ever visited our world, nor any knowledge of his divinity, as indicated by his previous existence with the Father. {RH, June 11, 1908 par. 4}

“The Bible points to God as its Author; yet it was written by human hands; and in the varied style of its different books it presents the characteristics of the several writers. The truths revealed are all ‘given by inspiration of God’ (2 Timothy 3:16); yet they are expressed in the words of men. The Infinite One by his Holy Spirit had shed light into the minds and hearts of his servants. He has given dreams and visions, symbols and figures; and those to whom the truth was thus revealed, have themselves embodied the thought in human language. {RH, August 30, 1906 par. 5}

“The ten commandments were spoken by God himself, and were written by his own hand. They are of divine, and not of human, composition. But the Bible, with its God-given truths expressed in the language of men, represents a union of the divine and the human. Such a union existed in the nature of Christ, who was the Son of God and the Son of man. Thus it is true of the Bible, as it was of Christ, that ‘the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.’ John 1:14. {RH, August 30, 1906 par. 6}

“Written in different ages, by men who differed widely in rank and occupation and in mental and spiritual endowments, the books of the Bible present a wide contrast in style, as well as a diversity in the nature of the subjects unfolded. Different forms of expression are employed by different writers; often the same truth is more strikingly presented by one than by another. And as several writers present a subject under varied aspects and relations, there may appear, to the superficial, careless, or prejudiced reader, to be discrepancy or contradiction, where the thoughtful, reverent student, with clearer insight, discerns the underlying harmony. {RH, August 30, 1906 par. 7}

“As presented through different individuals, the truth is brought out in its varied aspects. One writer is more strongly impressed with one phase of a subject; he grasps those points that harmonize with his experience or with his power of perception and appreciation; another seizes upon a different phase and each, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, presents what is most

forcibly impressed upon his own mind; a different aspect of the truth in each, but a perfect harmony through all. And the truths thus revealed unite to form a perfect whole, adapted to meet the wants of men in all the circumstances and experiences of life. {RH, August 30, 1906 par. 8}

There is not always perfect order or apparent unity in the Scriptures. . . . The truths of the Bible are as pearls hidden. They must be searched, dug out by painstaking effort. Those who take only a surface view of the Scriptures will, with their superficial knowledge, which they think is very deep, talk of the contradictions of the Bible, and question the authority of the Scriptures. But those whose hearts are in harmony with truth and duty will search the Scriptures with a heart prepared to receive divine impressions. The illuminated soul sees a spiritual unity, one grand golden thread running through the whole, but it requires patience, thought, and prayer to trace out the precious golden thread. {FLB 11.5}

Through all time this Book is to stand as a revelation of Jehovah. To human beings the divine oracles have been committed to be the power of God. The truths of the Word of God are not mere sentiment, but the utterances of the Most High. He who makes these truths a part of his life becomes in every sense a new creature. He is not given new mental powers, but the darkness that through ignorance and sin have clouded the understanding is removed. —RH, Nov 10, 1904. {1MCP 98.2}

The precious Saviour will send help just when we need it. The way to heaven is consecrated by His footprints. Every thorn that wounds our feet has wounded His. Every cross that we are called to bear He has borne before us. The Lord permits conflicts, to prepare the soul for peace. The time of trouble is a fearful ordeal for God's people; but it is the time for every true believer to look up, and by faith he may see the bow of promise encircling him. {GC 633.1}

Christ reached the people where they were. He presented the plain truth to their minds in the most forcible, simple language. The humble poor, the most unlearned, could comprehend, through faith in Him, the most exalted truths. No one needed to consult the learned doctors as to His meaning. He did not perplex the ignorant with mysterious inferences, or use unaccustomed and learned words, of which they had no knowledge. The greatest Teacher the world has ever known, was the most definite, simple, and practical in His instruction. {GW 49.3}

In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us. . . . “Unto *us* a child is born, unto *us* a son is given: . . .” (Isaiah 9:6). God has adopted human nature in the person of His Son, and has carried the same into the highest heaven. It is the “Son of man” who shares the throne of the universe. . . . In Christ the family of earth and the family of heaven are bound together. Christ

glorified is our brother. Heaven is enshrined in humanity, and humanity is enfolded in the bosom of Infinite Love. {AG 79.5}

For our sake Jesus emptied Himself of His glory; He clothed His divinity with humanity that He might touch humanity, that His personal presence might be among us, that we might know that He was acquainted with all our trials, and sympathized with our grief, that every son and daughter of Adam might understand that Jesus is the friend of sinners (ST April 18, 1892). {7BC 927.1}

Christ stood at the head of humanity in the garb of humanity. So full of sympathy and love was His attitude that the poorest was not afraid to come to Him. He was kind to all, easily approached by the most lowly. He went from house to house, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, comforting the mourners, soothing the afflicted, speaking peace to the distressed. He took the little children in His arms and blessed them, and spoke words of hope and comfort to the weary mothers. With unflinching tenderness and gentleness He met every form of human woe and affliction. Not for Himself, but for others, did He labor. He was willing to humble Himself, to deny Himself. He did not seek to distinguish Himself. He was the servant of all. It was His meat and drink to be a comfort and a consolation to others, to gladden the sad and heavy-laden ones with whom He daily came in contact. {MM 19.3}

Holiness is wholeness to God. The soul is surrendered to God. The will, and even the thoughts, are brought into subjection to the will of Christ. The love of Jesus fills the soul, and is constantly going out in a clear, refreshing stream, to make glad the hearts of others (MS 33, 1911). {6BC 1076.2}

The resurrection of Jesus was a sample of the final resurrection of all who sleep in Him. The risen body of the Saviour, His deportment, the accents of His speech, were all familiar to His followers. In like manner will those who sleep in Jesus rise again. We shall know our friends even as the disciples knew Jesus. Though they may have been deformed, diseased, or disfigured in this mortal life, yet in their resurrected and glorified body their individual identity will be perfectly preserved, and we shall recognize, in the face radiant with the light shining from the face of Jesus, the lineaments of those we love (3SP 219). {6BC 1092.6}

Our personal identity is preserved in the resurrection, though not the same particles of matter or material substance as went into the grave. The wondrous works of God are a mystery to man. The spirit, the character of man, is returned to God, there to be preserved. In the resurrection every man will have his own character. God in His own time will call forth the dead, giving again the breath of life, and bidding the dry bones live. The same form will come forth, but it will be free from disease and every defect. It lives again bearing the same individuality of features, so that friend will recognize friend. There is no law of God in nature

which shows that God gives back the same identical particles of matter which composed the body before death. God shall give the righteous dead a body that will please Him. {6BC 1093.2}

All come forth from their graves the same in stature as when they entered the tomb. Adam, who stands among the risen throng, is of lofty height and majestic form, in stature but little below the Son of God. He presents a marked contrast to the people of later generations; in this one respect is shown the great degeneracy of the race. But all arise with the freshness and vigor of eternal youth. {GC 644.3}

God is the author of all truth; and truth practiced prepares the way for more advanced truth. When God's delegated servants proclaim fresh truth, the Holy Spirit moves upon the mind which has been prepared by walking in the light, quickening the perceptive faculties to discern the beauty and majesty of truth. {TM 378.1}

Such transformation of character as is seen in the life of John is ever the result of communion with Christ. There may be marked defects in the character of an individual, yet when he becomes a true disciple of Christ, the power of divine grace transforms and sanctifies him. Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, he is changed from glory to glory, until he is like Him whom he adores. {AA 559.1}

While the wind is itself invisible, it produces effects that are seen and felt. So the work of the Spirit upon the soul will reveal itself in every act of him who has felt its saving power. When the Spirit of God takes possession of the heart, it transforms the life. Sinful thoughts are put away, evil deeds are renounced; love, humility, and peace take the place of anger, envy, and strife. Joy takes the place of sadness, and the countenance reflects the light of heaven. No one sees the hand that lifts the burden, or beholds the light descend from the courts above. The blessing comes when by faith the soul surrenders itself to God. Then that power which no human eye can see creates a new being in the image of God. {DA 173.1}

By beholding we are to become changed; and as we meditate upon the perfections of the divine Model, we shall desire to become wholly transformed, and renewed in the image of His purity. It is by faith in the Son of God that transformation takes place in the character, and the child of wrath becomes the child of God. He passes from death unto life; he becomes spiritual and discerns spiritual things. The wisdom of God enlightens his mind, and he beholds wondrous things out of His law. As a man is converted by the truth, the work of transformation of character goes on. He has an increased measure of understanding. In becoming a man of obedience to God, he has the mind of Christ, and the will of God becomes his will. {1SM 338.1}

The Bible is its own expositor. Scripture is to be compared with scripture. The student should learn to view the word as a whole, and to see the relation of its parts. He should gain a knowledge of its grand central theme, of God's original purpose for the world, of the rise of the great controversy, and of the work of redemption. He should understand the nature of the two

principles that are contending for supremacy, and should learn to trace their working through the records of history and prophecy, to the great consummation. He should see how this controversy enters into every phase of human experience; how in every act of life he himself reveals the one or the other of the two antagonistic motives; and how, whether he will or not, he is even now deciding upon which side of the controversy he will be found. {Ed 190.2}

The Bible with its precious gems of truth was not written for the scholar alone. On the contrary, it was designed for the common people; and the interpretation given by the common people, when aided by the Holy Spirit, accords best with the truth as it is in Jesus. The great truths necessary for salvation are made clear as the noonday, and none will mistake and lose their way except those who follow their own judgment instead of the plainly revealed will of God. {5T 331.2}