

Knowledge of God Series – 2



A PERSONAL GOD

Ellen G. White
Spirit of Prophecy
1903-1904

A
PERSONAL
GOD

Ellen G. White
Spirit of Prophecy

1903-1904

Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 8, pp. 263-278

A Personal God

The mighty power that works through all nature and sustains all things is not, as some men of science represent, merely an all-pervading principle, an actuating energy. God is a spirit; yet He is a personal being, for man was made in His image.

Nature is not God

God's handiwork in nature is not God Himself in nature. The things of nature are an expression of God's character; by them we may understand His love, His power, and His glory; but we are not to regard nature as God. The artistic skill of human beings produces very beautiful workmanship, things that delight the eye and these things give us something of the idea of the designer; but the thing made is not the man. It is not the work, but the workman, that is counted worthy of honor. So, while nature is an expression of God's thought, it is not nature but the God of nature that is to be exalted.

“The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth,
These shall perish from the earth, and from under the heavens.”

“The portion of Jacob is not like these;
For He is the former of all things.”

“He hath made the earth by His power,
He hath established the world by His wisdom,
And by His understanding hath He stretched out the heavens.”
Jeremiah 10:11, 16, 12, A.R.V.

“Seek Him that maketh the Pleiades and Orion,
And turneth the shadow of death into the morning,
And maketh the day dark with night;
That calleth for the waters of the sea,
And poureth them out upon the face of the earth
(Jehovah is His name).”
Amos 5:8, A.R.V.

A Personal God Created Man

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, breathing, intelligent being. All parts of the human organism were put in action. The heart, the arteries, the veins, the tongue, the hands, the feet, the senses, the perceptions of the mind--all began their work, and all were placed under law. Man became a living soul. Through Jesus Christ a personal God created man and endowed him with intelligence and power.

Our substance was not hid from Him when we were made in secret. His eyes saw our substance, yet being imperfect; and in His book all our members were written, when as yet there were none of them.

Above all lower orders of being, God designed that man, the crowning work of His creation, should express His thought and reveal His glory. But man is not to exalt himself as God.

“Make a joyful noise unto Jehovah....
Serve Jehovah with gladness:
Come before His presence with singing.

“Know ye that Jehovah, He is God:
It is He that hath made us, and we are His;
We are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.

“Enter into His gates with thanksgiving,
And into His courts with praise:
Give thanks unto Him, and bless His name.”

“Exalt ye Jehovah our God,
And worship at His holy hill;
For Jehovah our God is holy.”
Psalm 100:1-4; 99:9, A.R.V.

God Revealed in Christ

As a personal being, God has revealed Himself in His Son, Jesus, the outshining of the Father's glory, “and the express image of His person” (Hebrews 1:3), was on earth found in fashion as a man. As a personal Saviour He came to the world. As a personal Saviour He ascended on high. As a personal Saviour He intercedes in the heavenly courts. Before

the throne of God in our behalf ministers “One like unto the Son of man.” Revelation 1:13.

Christ, the Light of the world, veiled the dazzling splendor of His divinity and came to live as a man among men, that they might, without being consumed, become acquainted with their Creator. No man has seen God at any time except as He is revealed through Christ.

“I and My Father are one,” Christ declared. “No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.” John 10:30; Matthew 11:27.

Christ came to teach human beings what God desires them to know. In the heavens above, in the earth, in the broad waters of the ocean, we see the handiwork of God. All created things testify to His power, His wisdom, His love. But not from the stars or the ocean or the cataract can we learn of the personality of God as it is revealed in Christ.

God saw that a clearer revelation than nature was needed to portray both His personality and His character. He sent His Son into the world to reveal, so far as could be endured by human sight, the nature and the attributes of the invisible God.

Had God desired to be represented as dwelling personally in the things of nature,—in the flower, the tree, the spire of grass,—would not Christ have spoken of this to His disciples when He was on the earth? But never in the teaching of Christ is God thus spoken of. Christ and the apostles taught clearly the truth of the existence of a personal God.

Christ revealed all of God that sinful human beings could bear without being destroyed. He is the divine Teacher, the Enlightener. Had God thought us in need of revelations other than those made through Christ and in His written word, He would have given them.

Christ’s Revelation of God to the Disciples

Let us study the words that Christ spoke in the upper chamber on the night before His crucifixion. He was nearing His hour of trial, and He sought to comfort His disciples, who were to be so severely tempted and tried.

“Let not your heart be troubled,” He said; “ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you....”

“Thomas saith unto Him, Lord, we know not whither Thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me. If ye had

known Me, ye should have known My Father also: and from henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him....

“Lord, show us the Father,” said Philip, “and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works.” John 14:1-10.

The disciples did not yet understand Christ’s words concerning His relation to God. Much of His teaching was still dark to them. They had asked many questions that revealed their ignorance of God’s relation to them and to their present and future interests. Christ desired them to have a clearer, more distinct knowledge of God.

“These things have I spoken unto you in parables,” He said; “but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in parables, but I shall show you plainly of the Father.” John 16:25, margin.

When on the Day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the disciples, they understood the truths that Christ had spoken in parables. The teachings that had been mysteries to them were made clear. The understanding that came to them with the outpouring of the Spirit made them ashamed of their fanciful theories. Their suppositions and interpretations were foolishness when compared with the knowledge of heavenly things which they now received. They were led by the Spirit, and light shone into their once darkened understanding.

But the disciples had not yet received the complete fulfillment of Christ’s promise. They received all the knowledge of God that they could bear, but the complete fulfillment of the promise that Christ would show them plainly of the Father was yet to come. Thus it is today. Our knowledge of God is partial and imperfect. When the conflict is ended and the Man Christ Jesus acknowledges before the Father His faithful workers, who, in a world of sin, have borne true witness for Him, they will understand clearly what now are mysteries to them.

Christ took with Him to the heavenly courts His glorified humanity. To those who receive Him, He gives power to become the sons of God, that at last God may receive them as His, to dwell with Him throughout eternity. If, during this life, they are loyal to God, they will at last “see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads.” Revelation 22:4. And what is the happiness of heaven but to see God? What greater joy could come to the sinner saved by the grace of Christ than to look upon the face of God and know Him as Father?

Testimony of Scripture

The Scriptures clearly indicate the relation between God and Christ, and they bring to view as clearly the personality and individuality of each.

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee? And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son?” Hebrews 1:1-5.

God is the Father of Christ; Christ is the Son of God. To Christ has been given an exalted position. He has been made equal with the Father. All the counsels of God are opened to His Son.

Jesus said to the Jews: “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.... The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth.” John 5:17-20.

Here again is brought to view the personality of the Father and the Son, showing the unity that exists between them.

This unity is expressed also in the seventeenth chapter of John, in the prayer of Christ for His disciples:

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.” John 17:20-23.

Wonderful statement! The unity that exists between Christ and His disciples does not destroy the personality of either. They are one in purpose, in mind, in character, but not in person. It is thus that God and Christ are one.

The relation between the Father and the Son, and the personality of both, are made plain in this scripture also:

“Thus speaketh Jehovah of hosts, saying,
Behold, the man whose name is the Branch;
And He shall grow up out of His place;
And He shall build the temple of Jehovah;...
And He shall bear the glory,
And shall sit and rule upon His throne;
And He shall be a priest upon His throne;
And the counsel of peace shall be between Them both.”
Zechariah 6:12, 13, A. R. V.

“The Everlasting God”

In the word, God is spoken of as “the everlasting God.” This name embraces past, present, and future. God is from everlasting to everlasting. He is the Eternal One.

“The eternal God is Thy dwelling place,
And underneath are the everlasting arms:
And He thrust out the enemy from before thee,
And said, Destroy.
And Israel dwelleth in safety,
The fountain of Jacob alone,
In a land of corn and wine;
Yea, His heavens drop down dew.
Happy art thou, O Israel:
Who is like unto thee,
A people saved by the Lord,
The shield of thy help,
And that is the sword of thy excellency.”
Deuteronomy 33:27-29, R. V.

“Before the mountains were brought forth,
Or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world,
Even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God.
Thou turnest man to dust,
And sayest, Return, ye children of men.
For a thousand years in Thy sight
Are but as yesterday when it is past,
And as a watch in the night.
Thou carriest them away as with a flood;
They are as a sleep:
In the morning they are like grass which groweth up.

In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up;
In the evening it is cut down, and withereth.”
Psalm 90:2-6, A. R. V, margin.

“So teach us to number our days,
That we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.”
“O satisfy us early with Thy mercy;
That we may rejoice and be glad all our days.
Make us glad according to the days wherein Thou hast
afflicted us,
And the years wherein we have seen evil.
Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants,
And Thy glory unto their children.
And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us:
And establish Thou the work of our hands upon us;
Yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it.”
Psalm 90:12, 14-17.

“The Lord reigneth, He is clothed with majesty;
The Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith He hath girded
Himself:
The world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.
Thy throne is established of old:
Thou art from everlasting.”
Psalm 93:1, 2.

His Loving-Kindness

“All His work is done in faithfulness.
He loveth righteousness and justice:
The earth is full of the loving-kindness of Jehovah.”
“Blessed is the nation whose God is Jehovah,
The people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance.”
“Behold, the eye of Jehovah is upon them that fear Him,
Upon them that hope in His loving-kindness;
To deliver their soul from death,
And to keep them alive in famine.
Our soul hath waited for Jehovah:
He is our help and our shield.
For our heart shall rejoice in Him,

Because we have trusted in His holy name.”
Psalm 33:4, 5, 12, 18-21, A. R. V.

“I sought Jehovah, and He answered me,
And delivered me from all my fears.
They looked unto Him, and were radiant;
And their faces shall never be confounded.
This poor man cried, and Jehovah heard him,
And saved him out of all his troubles.
The angel of Jehovah encampeth round about them that
fear Him,
And delivereth them.
O taste and see that Jehovah is good:
Blessed is the man that taketh refuge in Him.
O fear Jehovah, ye His saints;
For there is no want to them that fear Him.
The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger;
But they that seek Jehovah shall not want any good thing.”
“The righteous cried, and Jehovah heard,
And delivered them out of all their troubles.
Jehovah is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart,
And saveth such as are of a contrite spirit.”
Psalm 34:4-10, 17, 18, A. R. V.

“The Lord redeemeth the soul of His servants:
And none of them that trust in Him shall be desolate.”
Verse 22.

“Jehovah is merciful and gracious,
Slow to anger, and abundant in loving-kindness.
He will not always chide;
Neither will He keep His anger forever.
He hath not dealt with us after our sins,
Nor rewarded us after our iniquities.
For as the heavens are high above the earth,
So great is His loving-kindness toward them that fear Him.
As far as the east is from the west,
So far hath He removed our transgressions from us.
Like as a father pitieth his children,
So Jehovah pitieth them that fear Him.

For He knoweth our frame;
He remembereth that we are dust.
As for man, his days are as grass;
As a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.
For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone;
And the place thereof shall know it no more.
But the loving-kindness of Jehovah is from everlasting to
everlasting upon them that fear Him,
And His righteousness unto children's children;
To such as keep His covenant,
And to those that remember His precepts to do them.”
Psalm 103:8-18, A. R. V.

His Providential Care

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.

“Bless Jehovah, O my soul.
O Jehovah my God, Thou art very great;
Thou art clothed with honor and majesty:
Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment;
Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain;
Who layeth the beams of His chambers in the waters;
Who maketh the clouds His chariot;
Who walketh upon the wings of the wind;
Who maketh winds His messengers;
Flames of fire His ministers;

“Who laid the foundations of the earth,
That it should not be moved forever.
Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a vesture;

The waters stood above the mountains.
At Thy rebuke they fled;
At the voice of Thy thunder they hasted away
(The mountains rose, the valleys sank down)
Unto the place which Thou hadst founded for them.
Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over;
That they turn not again to cover the earth.

“He sendeth forth springs into the valleys;
They run among the mountains;
They give drink to every beast of the field;
The wild asses quench their thirst.
By them the birds of the heavens have their habitation;
They sing among the branches.
He watereth the mountains from His chambers:
The earth is filled with the fruit of Thy works.
He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle,
And herb for the service of man;

“That He may bring forth food out of the earth,
And wine that maketh glad the heart of man,
And oil to make his face to shine
And bread that strengtheneth man’s heart.
The trees of Jehovah are filled with moisture,
The cedars of Lebanon, which He hath planted;
Where the birds make their nests:
As for the stork, the fir trees are her house.
The high mountains are for the wild goats;
The rocks are a refuge for the conies.

“He appointed the moon for seasons:
The sun knoweth his going down.
Thou makest darkness, and it is night,
Wherein all the beasts of the forest creep forth.
The young lions roar after their prey,
And seek their food from God.
The sun ariseth, they get them away,
And lay them down in their dens.
Man goeth forth unto his work
And to his labor until the evening.

“O Jehovah, how manifold are Thy works!
In wisdom hast Thou made them all:

The earth is full of Thy riches.
Yonder is the sea, great and wide,
Wherein are things creeping innumerable,
Both small and great beasts.
There go the ships;
There is leviathan, whom Thou hast formed to play therein.
These wait all for Thee,
That Thou mayest give them their food in due season.
Thou givest unto them, they gather;
Thou openest Thy hand,
They are satisfied with good.
Thou hidest Thy face,
They are troubled;
Thou takest away their breath,
They die,
And return to their dust.
Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit,
They are created;
And Thou renewest the face of the ground.

“Let the glory of Jehovah endure forever;
Let Jehovah rejoice in His works:
Who looketh on the earth, and it trembleth;
He toucheth the mountains, and they smoke.
I will sing unto Jehovah as long as I live:
I will sing praise to my God while I have any being.
Let my meditation be sweet unto Him:
I will rejoice in Jehovah.”
Psalm 104:1-34, A. R. V.

“Thou that art the confidence of all the ends of the earth,
And of them that are afar off upon the sea:
Who by His strength setteth fast the mountains,
Being girded about with might:
Who stilleth the roaring of the seas,...
And the tumult of the peoples....
Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to
rejoice....
Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness;
And Thy paths drop fatness.”
Psalm 65:5-11, A. R. V.

“Jehovah upholdeth all that fall,
And raiseth up all those that are bowed down.
The eyes of all wait for Thee;
And Thou givest them their food in due season.
Thou openest Thy hand,
And satisfiest the desire of every living thing.”
Psalm 145:14-16, A. R. V.

His Long-Suffering Mercy

No earthly parent ever pleaded so earnestly with an erring child as He who made us pleads with the transgressor. No human, loving interest ever followed the impenitent with invitations so tender:

“Thou hast not called upon Me, O Jacob; but
Thou hast been weary of Me, O Israel.” Isaiah 43:22.

“O My people, what have I done unto thee?
And wherein have I wearied thee?” Micah 6:3.

“When Israel was a child, then I loved him,
And called My son out of Egypt.” Hosea 11:1.

“Jehovah’s portion is His people;
Jacob is the lot of His inheritance.
He found him in a desert land,
And in the waste howling wilderness;
He compassed him about, He cared for him,
He kept him as the apple of His eye.
As an eagle that stirreth up her nest,
That fluttereth over her young,
He spread abroad His wings, He took them,
He bare them on His pinions.”
Deuteronomy 32:9-11, A. R. V.

“They kept not the covenant of God,
And refused to walk in His law.”
Psalm 78:10.

“The more the prophets called them, the more they went from
them....
Yet I taught Ephraim to walk;
I took them on My arms;

But they knew not that I healed them.
I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love....
My people are bent on backsliding from Me:
Though they call them to Him that is on high,
None at all will exalt Him.”
Hosea 11:2-7, A. R. V.

“But He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity,
And destroyed them not:
Yea, many a time turned He His anger away,
And did not stir up all His wrath.
For He remembered that they were but flesh;
A wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.”
Psalm 78:38, 39.

Though He “delivered His strength into captivity, and His glory into the enemy’s hand,” yet He said, “My lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer My faithfulness to fail.” Psalm 78:61; 89:33.

“Is Ephraim My dear son? is he a pleasant [Authorized Version] child? for as often as I speak against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore My heart yearneth for him.” Jeremiah 31:20, A. R. V.

“How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?
How shall I cast thee off, Israel?
How shall I make thee as Admah?
How shall I set thee as Zeboiim?
My heart is turned within Me,
My compassions are kindled together.
I will not execute the fierceness of Mine anger,
I will not return to destroy Ephraim:
For I am God, and not man;
The Holy One in the midst of thee;
And I will not come in wrath.”
Hosea 11:8, 9, A. R. V.

“O Israel, return unto Jehovah thy God;
For thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.
Take with you words,
And return unto Jehovah: say unto Him,
Take away all iniquity, and accept that which is good....
Assyria shall not save us;
We will not ride upon horses;
Neither will we say any more to the work of our hands,

Ye are our gods;
For in Thee the fatherless findeth mercy.”
Hosea 14:1-3, A. R. V.

“They shall walk after Jehovah....
The children shall come trembling from the west.
They shall come trembling as a bird out of Egypt,
And as a dove out of the land of Assyria;
And I will make them to dwell in their houses, saith Jehovah.”
Hosea 11:10, 11, A. R. V.

“I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely;
For Mine anger is turned away from him.
I will be as the dew unto Israel;
He shall blossom as the lily,
And cast forth his roots as Lebanon.
His branches shall spread,
And his beauty shall be as the olive tree,
And his smell as Lebanon.
They that dwell under his shadow shall return;
They shall revive as the grain,
And blossom as the vine....
Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols?
I have answered, and will regard him:
I am like a green fir tree;
From Me is thy fruit found.

“Who is wise, that he may understand these things?
Prudent, that he may know them?
For the ways of Jehovah are right,
And the just shall walk in them.”
Hosea 14:4-9, A. R. V.

“Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and
passeth over the transgression
Of the remnant of His heritage?
He retaineth not His anger forever,
Because He delighteth in loving-kindness.
He will again have compassion upon us;
He will tread our iniquities underfoot;
And Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.”
Micah 7:18, 19, A. R. V.

“Jehovah appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.” “The Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he.” “I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow.” “My people shall be satisfied with My goodness, saith Jehovah.” Jeremiah 31:3, A.R.V., 11, 13, A.V., 14, A.R.V.

“Sing, O daughter of Zion;
Shout, O Israel;
Be glad and rejoice with all the heart,
O daughter of Jerusalem.
Jehovah hath taken away thy judgments,
He hath cast out thine enemy:
The King of Israel, even Jehovah, is in the midst of thee;
Thou shalt not fear evil any more.
In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not;
O Zion, let not thy hands be slack.
Jehovah thy God is in the midst of thee,
A Mighty One who will save;
He will rejoice over thee with joy;
He will rest in His love;
He will joy over thee with singing.”
Zephaniah 3:14-17, A. R. V.

“This God is our God for ever and ever:
He will be our guide even unto death.”
Psalm 48:14.

Manuscript 124, 1903

A Personal God

The mighty power that works through all nature and sustains all things is not, as some men of science represent, merely an all-pervading principle, an actuating energy. God is a spirit; yet He is a personal being; for men were made in His image. As a personal being, God has revealed Himself in His Son, Jesus, the outshining of the Father's glory, "and the express image of His person," was on earth found in fashion as a man. [Hebrews 1:3.] As a personal Saviour, He came to the world. As a personal Saviour, He ascended on high. As a personal Saviour, He intercedes in the heavenly courts. Before the throne of God in our behalf ministers "One like the Son of man." [Daniel 7:13.]

God Revealed in Christ

As Jehovah, the supreme Ruler, God could not personally communicate with sinful men, but He so loved the world that He sent Jesus to our world as a revelation of Himself. "I and My Father are one," Christ declared. [John 10:30.] "No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." [Matthew 11:27.]

And Christ is also the revealer of the hearts of men. He is the expositor of sin. By Him the characters of all are to be tested. To Him all judgment has been committed, "because He is the Son of man." [John 5:27.]

Taking humanity upon Him, Christ came to be one with humanity and at the same time to reveal our heavenly Father to sinful human beings. He was in all things made like unto His brethren. He became flesh, even as we are. He was hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He shared the lot of men, and yet He was the blameless Son of God. He was a stranger and sojourner on the earth—in the world, but not of the world; tempted and tried as men and women today are tempted and tried, yet living a life free from spot or stain of sin. "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." [Hebrews 4:15.] In His strength men and women can live the life of purity and nobility that He lived.

Christ came to teach human beings what God desires them to know. Just before His trial and crucifixion, He said to His disciples, "Hitherto

ye have asked nothing in My name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs, but the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father.” [John 16:24, 25.]

“At that day ye shall ask in My name; and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

“His disciples said unto Him, Lo, now speakest Thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now we are sure that Thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask Thee; by this we believe that Thou camest forth from God.

“Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe? Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. These things have I spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” [Verses 26-33.]

The disciples had asked many questions that revealed their ignorance of God’s relation to them and to their present and future interests. Christ desired them to have a clearer, more distinct knowledge of God. I will show you the Father and will make you better acquainted with Him, He said. It is this knowledge that Christians today need. This knowledge, which Christ alone can give, is the highest of all education.

When on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the disciples, they understood the truths that Christ had spoken in proverbs. The teachings that had been mysteries to them were made clear. The understanding that came to them with the outpouring of the Spirit made them ashamed of their fanciful theories. Their suppositions and interpretations were foolishness compared with the knowledge of heavenly things that now came to them. Their confused ideas were gone; they were led of the Spirit; and light shone into their once darkened understanding.

While with the disciples, Christ had revealed to them all the knowledge of God that they could bear. The complete fulfilment of the promise that He would show them plainly of the Father was yet to come. Thus it is today. Now we know in part only. When the conflict is ended, and the Man Christ Jesus acknowledges before the Father His faithful workers, who in a world of sin have borne true witness for Him, they will understand clearly what now are mysteries to them.

Christ took with Him to the heavenly courts His glorified humanity. To those who receive Him, He gives power to become the sons of God,

that at last God may receive them as His, to dwell with Him throughout all eternity. If during this life they are loyal to God, they will at last “see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads.” [Revelation 22:4.] And what is the happiness of heaven but to see God? What greater joy could come to the sinner, saved by the grace of Christ, than to look upon the face of God and know Him as Father? “Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” [1 Corinthians 13:12.]

Some today are coming to hold false ideas of the invisible God and are presenting these ideas to others. Let those who do this know that their childish portrayal of God is a misconception. They know not God. Before the world, before angels, and before men, they are giving a false representation of Him.

To those to whom these fanciful interpretations are presented, I would say, Let not these sentiments charm your senses and lead you into paths of Satan’s making. Beware, beware of spiritualistic ideas of God. Those who entertain such ideas greatly dishonor Him. Let every one humble his heart before God.

Personality and Individuality

The seventeenth chapter of John speaks plainly regarding the personality of God and of Christ and of their relation to each other. “Father, the hour is come,” Christ said; “glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee; as Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him. And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.” [Verses 1-3.]

“And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world; Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me, and they have kept Thy word.

“They have known that all things whatsoever Thou hast given Me are of Thee. For I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came from Thee, and they have believed that thou didst send Me. I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given Me; for they are Thine. And all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me; that they may be one, as We are.” [Verses 5-11.] Here is personality and individuality.

There is no new gospel to be preached. Christ revealed all of God that sinful human beings could bear without being destroyed. He is the divine Teacher, the Enlightener. Had He thought us in need of revelations other than those made in His Word, He would have given them.

Christ revealed God to His disciples in a way that performed in their hearts a special work, such as He has long been urging us to allow Him to do in our hearts. There are many who in dwelling too largely upon theory have lost sight of the living power of the Saviour's example. They have lost sight of the brightness and glory of His transfiguration; lost sight of Him also as the humble, self-denying worker, bearing up under the weariness of constant effort, walking through the dusty streets to secure in the thoroughfares of travel a position from which His voice could reach the multitudes passing to and fro, that some souls might be helped to walk in the narrow path of holiness.

God's handiwork in nature is not God Himself in nature. God uses nature to reveal His power and His love. But no one is authorized to say that God Himself is in leaf or flower or tree.

Who By Searching Can Find Out God?

Human talent and human conjecture have tried by searching to find out God. But guesswork has proved itself to be guesswork. Man cannot by searching find out God. This problem has not been given to human beings. All that man needs to know and can know of God has been revealed in His Word and in the life of His Son, the great Teacher.

Let men remember that they have a Ruler in the heavens, a God who will not be trifled with. He who puts his reason to the stretch in an effort to exalt himself and to delineate God will find that he might far better have stood as a humble suppliant before God, confessing himself to be only an erring human being.

God cannot be understood by men. His ways and works are past finding out. In regard to the revelations that He has made of Himself in His Word we may talk. But other than this, let us say of Him, "Thou art God, and Thy ways are past finding out." [See Psalm 90:2; Romans 11:33.]

There is a knowledge of God and of Christ which all who are saved must have. "This is life eternal," Christ said, "that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." [John 17:3.]

The question for us to study is, “What is truth” [John 18:38]—the truth for this time, which is to be cherished, loved, honored, and obeyed? The devotees of science have been defeated and disheartened in their effort to find out God. What they need to inquire is, What is truth? How many of those who profess to minister at the altar of God have asked this question? How many of those who search the heavens have inquired, as they have beheld the wondrous works of God, “What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that Thou visitest him?” [Hebrews 2:6.]

Let us learn from the representation made in the sixth chapter of Isaiah the greatness of our God. The prophet writes: “In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord, sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims; each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is filled with His glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

“Then said I, Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

“Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.” [Verses 1-7.]

Manuscript 137, 1903

The Personality of God

The word of the Lord to me is that I am to repeat the instruction that God has given me, showing what He has revealed for the benefit of His people and the way in which He has presented His word to them. If God had desired to have Himself represented as being in the things of nature—in flower and leaf and tree—Christ would have spoken of this when He was in the earth. But where in the teaching of Christ is God spoken of as He is in Living Temple? In Patriarchs and Prophets God has presented to His people the way in which they are to view the plan of salvation. The instruction contained in this book is not an idle tale. It is the presentation of truth in accordance with the Word of God.

In the beginning of my work, when the Lord first commissioned me to proclaim the truth, I was called upon to rebuke those holding sophistries similar to those presented in Living Temple. I could not understand the sentiments held, but the Lord gave me a message to bear before the companies that I was to meet. I bore the message, and all controversy was at an end. Evidence was given of the power of God working through His humble instrument, and those who were willing to receive this evidence did not make the least attempt to oppose the message.

Again and again during my experience in the Lord's work, I have been called upon to meet these erroneous sentiments. In every case, clear, powerful light has been given that God is the eternal, self-existent One. From my girlhood I have been given plain instruction that God is a person, and that Christ is "the express image of His person." [Hebrews 1:3.] God always has been. That which concerns us is not the how or the wherefore.

In the Word God is spoken of as the everlasting God. This name embraces past, present, and future. God is from everlasting to everlasting. He is the Eternal One. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms; and He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them. Israel shall dwell in safety alone; the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thine excellency."

“Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God. Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest, Return, ye children of men. For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep; in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up, in the evening it is cut down, and withereth. For we are consumed by Thine anger, and by Thy wrath are we troubled. Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance. For all our days are passed away in Thy wrath; we spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

“Who knoweth the power of Thine anger? Even according to Thy fear, so is Thy wrath. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Return, O Lord, how long; and let it repent Thee concerning Thy servants. O satisfy us early with Thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad according to the days wherein Thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants, and Thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands, establish Thou it.” [Psalm 90:2-17.]

“He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust. His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.

“Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet. Because he hath set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him;

I will set him on high, because he hath known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him. I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him; and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him My salvation." [Psalm 91:1-16.]

"The Lord reigneth, He is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith He girded Himself; the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved. Thy throne is established of old; Thou art from everlasting. The floods have lifted up, O Lord; the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves. The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea. Thy testimonies are very sure; holiness becometh Thine house, O Lord, forever." [Psalm 93:1-5.]

In view of these Scriptures, who will dare to interpret God and place in the minds of others the sentiments regarding Him that are contained in Living Temple? These theories are the theories of the great deceiver, and in the lives of those who receive them there will be sad chapters. This is Satan's device to unsettle the foundation of our faith, to shake our confidence in the Lord's guidance and in the experience that He has given us. Many things of like character will in the future arise. I entreat our medical missionary workers to be afraid to trust the suppositions and devising of any human being who entertains the thought that the path over which the people of God have been led for the last fifty years is a wrong path. Beware of those who, not having had any decided experience in the leading of the Lord's Spirit, would suppose that this leading is all a fallacy; that we have not the truth; that we are not the people of the Lord, gathered by Him from all countries and nations. Beware of those who would tear down the foundation, upon which we have been building for the last fifty years, to establish a new doctrine. I know that these new theories are from the enemy.

Let those who would bring in fanciful ideas of God awake to a sense of their danger. This is too solemn a subject to be trifled with.

The root of idolatry is an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. It is because men have not faith in the presence and power of God that they have been putting their trust in their own wisdom. They have been devising and planning to exalt themselves and find salvation in their own works. A deceptive influence from satanic agencies is coming in, because leaders whom the Lord has warned and entreated and counseled are choosing their own wisdom in the place of the wisdom of God. To such ones the warning comes, "Talk no more exceedingly proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth; for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighed."

God declares, “The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool; where is the house that ye build unto Me; and where is the place of My rest? For all these things hath Mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord; but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word.” [Isaiah 66:1, 2.] Though heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain God, He, the high and holy One, reveals Himself to the humble and contrite, filling the hearts of His chosen ones with the light of His presence.

“Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.” [Job 28:28.] Neither by searching the recesses of the earth nor in vain endeavors to penetrate the mysteries of God’s being is wisdom found. It is found, rather, in humbly receiving the revelations that He has been pleased to make and in conforming the life to His will.

He who knows the heart of man will render to every one according as his work shall be. In this life He will give to the humble, teachable ones, who look to Him in faith and dependence, wisdom and understanding, and in the life to come He will bestow on them the gift of immortality.

Let us search the Word of God diligently, that we may obtain the wisdom that we need in order to honor Him, that we may purify our hearts from all defilement and be prepared to enter the mansions that Christ has gone to prepare for those who love Him. There we shall gain a true knowledge of God. Throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity we shall delight in His personal presence.

John the Revelator writes, “I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea. And I... saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful. And He said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son.” [Revelation 21:1-7.]

“O Lord, Thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, and Thou understandest my thoughts afar off. Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.... Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid Thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.” [Psalm 139:1-3, 5, 6.]

“Great is our Lord, and of great power; His understanding is infinite.” [Psalm 147:5.] “The ways of man are before the Lord, and He pondereth all his goings.” [Proverbs 5:21.] “He revealeth the deep and secret things. He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with Him.” [Daniel 2:22.] “Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world.” [Acts 15:18.] “O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counselor? Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things; to whom be glory forever.” [Romans 11:33-36.]

“That which is revealed belongeth unto us and to our children.” [Deuteronomy 29:29.] But let not finite man attempt to interpret God. Here silence is eloquence. The Omniscient One is above discussion by finite, erring beings. And since God understands our thoughts afar off, since He is acquainted with all our ways, since there is not a word in our tongues that He does not know, might we not better be very careful how we speak of Him? Will he who speculates in regard to God care to meet his words in that day when all things are brought to light, when falsehood and truth are placed in sharp contrast? God is the all-wise, omniscient One, knowing all things. He can speedily bring to naught the foolish devisings of man.

The enemy is seeking to bring in among the people of God spiritualistic theories, which if accepted, would undermine the foundation of the faith that has made us what we are. He leads men to present fables clothed with Scripture. There are those who assert that Sister White’s writings are in harmony with these teachings. I declare this to be false. Men may misapply Scripture; they may misinterpret my words; but God understands their devising. How thankful I am for this! When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard for us against him.

“The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the cre-

ation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse; because that when they knew God"—by the witness of His Holy Spirit, to testimonies borne to them—"they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." The Lord sent them light, but they did not receive it. "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things." [Romans 1:18-23.]

This Scripture is applicable to all who regard God as He is represented in Living Temple. Those who continue to accept the sophistry in this book will be led on and on in delusion, just as were many to whom I was commissioned to bear a testimony after the passing of the time in 1844.

I know that the leaders in the medical missionary work do not know whither their steps are tending. I call upon them to stop before they take another step to tear away the strongholds of our faith.

Prophecy Waymarks Publications
Biblical Publications by Seventh-day Adventists

2076 Heritage Way, Addy, WA 99101

Website: prophecywaymarks.com

E-mail: prophecywaymarks@gmail.com

Phone: 406.594.1710

