



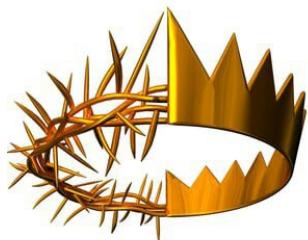
I Will Go

Maximizing Opportunities for Wealth Creation



Text | 2 Kings 4:1–7
Songs | Hymnal 88, NZK 38
AUGUST 2025





I Will Go

*Maximizing Opportunities
for Wealth Creation*

2025 CAMP MEETINGS

TEXT | 2 Kings 4:1–7
SONGS | Hymnal 88,
NZK 38



AUGUST 2025

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Introduction



Message from the **President**

Warm Christian greetings to all members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church across the West Rift Valley Field. With great joy and anticipation, I welcome you to the 2025 Camp Meetings under the empowering theme: "**Maximizing Opportunities for Wealth Creation.**"

Inspired by **2 Kings 4:1–7**, we journey with the widow who, in her moment of crisis, discovered a divine opportunity through obedience, faith, and wise stewardship. What seemed like a small jar of oil became the key to her restoration. This year, we will prayerfully explore how God can multiply what we have when we fully surrender to Him.

Camp meetings remain a vital time of spiritual renewal, fellowship, and practical equipping. As Ellen G. White reminds us: "*Camp meetings are one of the most important agencies in our work.*" (Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6, p. 31).

Karibuni sana to the 2025 Camp Meetings! May you leave empowered to turn your God-given opportunities into eternal impact.

Pr. Eliazer Kogey,
President, West Rift Valley Field



Message from the **Camp Co-ordinator**

We thank God yet again for taking care of us since the beginning of the year 2025 and more so since we had the 2024 camp meetings.

As we come to the end of the quinquinum, we have to thank our almighty God for the way He lead us through all the four years of our existence as a field. As West Rift Valley Field, we can confess that God has been so good to us all through. We have experienced positive trend in all aspects. There is upward trend in; Tithe, Combined offerings and Camp meeting offerings. We have grown in membership and church organization.

Now that we are entering the camp meeting season, let us maintain the trend by keeping the fire burning.

Let the spirit of the Lord encourage all of us to attend and get blessed. No one should give an excuse or reason not to participate in all that pertains the camp celebration.

Read; Leviticus 23:41-44,

May God Bless you all as you serve.

Pr. Cheluget
Camp Co-ordinator, West Rift Valley Field

CAMPMEETING TIME TABLE – 2025

CAMPMEETING TIME TABLE - 2025

CAMP NAME:
 TIME KEEPER:
 HOST PASTOR:

TIME	SUBJECT	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
		Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
6:50-7:50 am	Morning worship						
7:50-8:20 am			LE/Children Teacher	LE	LE	LE	LE
8.20-9.05 am	Sabbath School						
9.05-9.50 am	Bible Study						
9.50-10.50 am	Literature Evangelism						
10.50-11.00 am	BREAK		BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
11.00 am- 12.15pm	Sermon						
12.15-1.40 pm	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
1.40-2.00 pm	Song Service						
2.00-2.45 pm	Evangelism						
2.45 – 3.25 pm	Health						
3.25– 4.15 pm	Stewardship						
4.15-5.00 pm	Classes	OPENING THE CAMP					
	Senior parents						
	Young parents						
	Single parents/Widows						
	Youth -13-31 yrs						
	Children-0-12 yrs						
7.30-9.30 pm	Local Arrangements where applicable						

SABBATH MORNING

- 8.40-9.00 am - Song service
- 9.00 -9.20 am - Sabbath school
- 9.20-10.00 am -Lesson Discussion

SABBATH UPTO MID-DAY

- 10.15-10.45 am - Announcements
- 10.44 am-12.30 pm Divine service
- 12.40 -1.30 -Lunch Break

SABBATH AFTERNOON

- 1.30-2.30 pm - Songs/Choirs presentations
- 2.30 -3.30-A call to Reach the World- **I Will Go Growing in Him**
- 3.30-3.45 -Camp Offerings Reports
- 3.45-4.15 -Music Remarks
- 4.15-5.00 -Farewell by Speakers

Chapet 1

SERMON

I WILL GO

Maximizing opportunities for Wealth Creation Part 1

Deuteronomy 8:18 (*NIV*)

But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.

Ephesians 5:15-16

Be very careful, then, how you live —not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

2 Kings 4:1-7

The Widow's Olive Oil

The wife of a man from the company of the prophets cried out to Elisha, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that he revered the LORD. But now his creditor is coming to take my two boys as his slaves."

Elisha replied to her, "How can I help you? Tell me, what do you have in your house?"

"Your servant has nothing there at all," she said, "except a small jar of olive oil."

Elisha said, "Go around and ask all your neighbors for empty jars. Don't ask for just a few. Then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour oil into all the jars, and as each is filled, put it to one side."

She left him and shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her and she kept pouring. When all the jars were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another one."

But he replied, "There is not a jar left." Then the oil stopped flowing.

She went and told the man of God, and he said, "Go, sell the oil and pay your debts. You and your sons can live on what is left."

I. Introduction and historical setting of 2 Kings 4:1-7:

The theme for this camp meetings 2025 is I will go: maximizing opportunity for wealth creation. The passage given to us for consideration is 2Kings 4:1-7.

The historical setting for this story is approximately 850-800 BC. During the reign of the kings of the northern kingdom of Israel.

This story occurred during the reign of the kings of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, after the division of the united monarchy (which split after Solomon's death in ~930 BC). There were different lineages of kings in the Northern Kingdom as opposed to the line of David in the Southern Kingdom. The kings of the Northern kingdom were mixed up; some were faithful many were not. Politically, the kingdoms were very unstable as they were marked by idolatry, dynastic struggles and threats from the surrounding kingdoms. Elisha the prophet was installed by the prophet Elijah who had opposed the Baal worship under king Ahab and Jezebel his wife. There were, however, some faithful remnant who were loyal to Yahweh in the northern kingdom. There were some schools of the prophets or centres for training for those who were being discipled into the worship of Yahweh to serve the people in the Northern Kingdom. Because of rampant idolatry the economic and social conditions were tough. Many were poor and

oppressed and there was even slavery in the land. “Debt slavery was common: If a man died with unpaid debts, creditors could legally take his children as slaves to repay the loan (cf. Leviticus 25:39, Deuteronomy 15:12).”

It is in this background that this woman, a widow of a prophet, who in our time might be called a Shepherdess finds herself; facing the loss of her two sons to slavery because of debt.

II. Life is Tough But God is Tougher! 2 Kings 4:1

The wife of a man from the company of the prophets cried out to Elisha, “Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that he revered the LORD. But now his creditor is coming to take my two boys as his slaves.”

Life in this present world has never been easy. God’s people have never found life easy at any one stage in history. If you are of the opinion that becoming a Christian or being a godly person is a way of escaping the realities of life then you need to think again. We do not follow Christ in order to have an easy life without challenges. As a matter of fact, Christ warned His followers that life would be hard for them (John 16:33). He even identified following Him with taking up the cross for crucifixion. Using the analogy of a journey, He described the road as narrow. But He assured us that those who continue by faith and do not give up will be saved. He is always there for us to cry to Him whenever the burdens of life become unbearable. This woman cried to the man of God Elisha! “My husband is dead!” That alone is very bad in the days when the husband was the sole winner of bread and women hardly owned property. Perhaps there is a woman in the congregation who understands what this Shepherdess is going through at this time. “My husband is dead. The one who has been providing for us is dead. Our source of income is gone. Our source of security is gone.

As if the death of a husband is not enough, he has left us with a debt. And the creditors are coming. Not only is she grieving but now she is under the threat of losing her two sons to the creditor. Notice she says “his creditors!” Not hers! I think husbands who are here ought to wake up to what this woman is going through. Her husband probably entered into debt without even consulting her. It is important that men discuss with their wives their financial situation at all times. Keeping your wife ignorant of your financial situation does not help the family. It is not wise to enter into debts without having discussed the need to borrow money with your family.

One great aspect of wealth creation is how you manage your resources. It is important that you avoid debt by all means. But if you have to borrow money for whatever reason then you must have a clear repayment plan that is acceptable to the family. The repayment plan must also take care of the risks involved in borrowing. One of them is death as was the case of this woman in story. If possible avoid borrowing for things that you can do without. Any time you borrow without clear and reasonable repayment plan you are actually entering into slavery because the creditors will come. They always come and when they do, they may not be friendly at all. They may not take your two sons today but you may lose everything and even go to jail. God has called us to be free and we must not use our freedom to fulfill the desires that are not reasonable and may destroy our relationship with Christ and with one another.

God does not want us to be ignorant of principles of wealth creation that can help us avoid the situation in which this woman found herself. Every Christian should know some basic principles of financial management:

1. Budget & track expenses: This is not easy for us in our cultural context with our extended families and lifestyle. A young man earned his first salary while staying in his brother's house. The brother asked him to send some money home for the school fees of their sisters' children. He responded by saying, "I did not budget for that this month." The brother looked at him with disbelief, "What budget are you talking about? Where would you be if we had budgeted?" And so, the cycle of life without budgets continues and we live without planning for our finances because the need for it is too much to allow for any meaningful budgeting process. But that need not be the case. It does not matter how little your income you can still budget. It simply means that you leave with a plan. As a child of God living in His kingdom you cannot afford not to plan for your life. Life does not happen. Life is managed. Life is about stewardship. And stewardship includes practicing discipline in financial management including budgeting. Lack of the discipline of planning is what resulted in this situation where now the husband is dead and the creditors are coming. Proverbs 13:18 "Whoever disregards discipline comes to poverty and shame."
2. Eat a little: Save a little: do not eat everything you earn even when you feel that it is not enough. Money is never enough even for the rich. There is always room for more. Whatever you're earning, save at least 25% of it. For those of you who are just beginning save more. And start today if you have not started. There will never be a time when you have enough to save. But save with a plan to invest into something that can make your wealth to grow. Make friendship with those who have studied about money and let them teach you how to grow your wealth. Minimize bad debt: If you are in employment or running a business eliminate high-interest liabilities. That keep your payables or debts as low and get rid of them as soon as possible. It will give you peace of mind and you will be able to focus on serving God rather than worrying about your creditors. Those who owe others do not have peace of mind. God has called you to a life of peace. He wants you to be at peace with everyone as much as it is within your control. If you are in real estate or business then you should use "strategic borrowing" wisely.
3. Seek guidance from professionals: Every Christian needs to consult a financial planner. Have a friend who understands how money works so that you do not operate in ignorance. Listening to a sermon on finances is not enough. Buy a good book on money matters and read it. The business people may have a lot to say on this subject but my intention here is to emphasize the need for proper financial management that ensures that your life does not end in debts. Ask God to give you wisdom that you may know how to effectively manage that which God has put under your care as a steward.
4. Finally, no situation is too hard for the Lord to deliver you. You may have made a financial mess of your life. Someone else may be responsible for your current financial challenge but if you honestly take your case to the Lord he will provide you with the way out. God loves you enough to care about your financial situation. He specializes in getting us out of difficult situations when we cry to him like this widow cried to Elisha. Yes Life is tough but God is tougher. Remember you are of value to God.

Your value or worth is not in silver or gold. You were bought with the price of the blood of Christ. You must never see yourself as rich or poor in terms of what the world calls rich or poor. Money does not define who you are. The precious blood of the lamb does define who you are in the eyes of God. No matter what you go through in life never refer to yourself as poor! Never say, poor me! You are a daughter of the living God; a son of the King of the universe. Therefore, you must see yourself as God sees you. Your situation is not permanent.

Your debts were paid by Christ on His cross. That is why the Bible says owe no man nothing but love. And it is because we owe love that we must work hard in every area of our life so that we become givers rather than borrowers. For it is more blessed to give than to receive. Live free from debts. It is God's purpose for your life that you become a giver, (Ephesians 5:28). God wants you to have enough and to share with those who do not have. And we shall talk about that in this series.

1 Peter 1:18-20

For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake.

DAY 2

I WILL GO

Maximizing opportunities for Wealth Creation Part 2

Deuteronomy 8:18 (NIV.)

But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.

Ephesians 5:15-16

Be very careful, then, how you live —not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

2 Kings 4:1-7

The Widow's Olive Oil

The wife of a man from the company of the prophets cried out to Elisha, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that he revered the LORD. But now his creditor is coming to take my two boys as his slaves."

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Elisha said, "Go around and ask all your neighbors for empty jars. Don't ask for just a few. Then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour oil into all the jars, and as each is filled, put it to one side."

She left him and shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her and she kept pouring. When all the jars were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another one."

But he replied, "There is not a jar left." Then the oil stopped flowing.

She went and told the man of God, and he said, "Go, sell the oil and pay your debts. You and your sons can live on what is left."

2. A Small Jar of Olive Oil

- 2 Kings 4:2
- Elisha replied to her, “How can I help you? Tell me, what do you have in your house?”
- “Your servant has nothing there at all,” she said, “except a small jar of olive oil.”

These two questions are very important if you want to maximize your opportunity for wealth creation. What Shall I do For You? It all begins by having clarity on your situation. Yes, your husband is dead. Yes, he has left you in debt. Yes, the creditors are coming. But what do you want me to do for you? Not being clear on what you want can be a problem in your way to wealth creation and financial freedom. There are people who want everything. They see a teacher they want to be a teacher. When they meet a farmer and they hear there is money in farming suddenly they want to be a farmer. When they hear somebody has bought a matatu and is making good money they want to buy a matatu. Let me tell you one simple truth: You cannot be everything. You are not expected by God to be everything. Life begins by making choices. You must know what you are good at. Discover what you are good at. Often it is what you are passionate about. Knowing what you want and what you are good at helps you to eliminate many other things that will only hurt you because you cannot follow through.

God has wired you with both natural talents and spiritual gifts that helps you to know what you can do or what you should do. Maybe you are a teacher nearing retirement and suddenly you think you can be a farmer when all your life you have never touched a jembe. You have no idea how long it takes to wait for the crops to grow before the harvest time. Define what you want within your God given talents and opportunities. You want to maximize your opportunities. To maximize means “to increase (something) as much as possible: to increase (something) to a maximum. It also means “to use (something) in a way that will get the best result.”

Maximizing is making the most of the opportunities you have as is given in Ephesians 5:15-16. It is all a part of your kingdom lifestyle of stewardship. It is all a part of our faithfulness to God that whatever He puts into our hands we make the most of it. We multiply it and use it to the maximum for God’s glory. Making the most of your opportunities is one way of showing that you are grateful to the grace of God that has brought salvation to you. The grace of God in Christ Jesus has transformed how we view life itself. We no longer live for ourselves, but for him who loved us and gave Himself for us. For us to live is Christ. It is because of this reality of our union with Christ that the apostle Paul writes,

“And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.” Colossians 3:23-24. It can also be translated do it from the soul, that is with your whole being. Do it with enthusiasm. Do it with sincerity of heart. Do it with full effort and passion. That is, make the most of the opportunity.

The second question is “what do you have in your house?” This is the reality of your situation. What do you have? Before you can get what you want you need to know what you have in your possession already. What is your current situation? What is your experience? God starts with what you have, not what you do not have. Yes, He can create from nothing, but He does not want you to minimize or ignore that which you have already. Secondly, if you can acknowledge that God has already given you something then you can be ready for him to increase it. He asked Moses what is that in your hand? That rod in the hand of Moses was enough. As long as Moses obeyed God the rod could become anything. It became a snake and swallowed all the idol snakes of Egyptians magicians. The same rod Moses used to divide the Red Sea and the children of Israel crossed over and were delivered. The miracles of God begin when you surrender what you have to Him.

Before Jesus fed the five thousand men, He asked the disciples “what do you have?” He maximized the two fishes and the five loaves. Same principle. Start with what you have. Consecrate it to God. And watch God do the miracle of multiplication. Here is the principle; your cooperation with God is key to your success in maximizing your opportunities for wealth creation. If you are willing to cooperate with God and use what you have, your quarter of an acre can yield more than one acre could ever do. God wants to be in everything you do. He wants to transform your business, farming, music, preaching, or whatever He has called you to do. He wants to enlarge it to the maximum for His own glory. It all starts with you surrendering what you have into His Hands.

Now let us turn to the response of the woman. We call this her self-evaluation: Her understanding of what she has or her financial worth. “Your servant has nothing there at all,” she said, “except a small jar of olive oil.” This is the spirit of poverty. When you have the spirit of poverty you will never have a healthy view of yourself. All you see is lack. Whatever you have is nothing in your own eyes. Do not exaggerate your poverty. “Your servant has nothing there at all.” The call of God in your life should make you have a different attitude about yourself. Your attitude should be in line with the Kingdom mindset. It is the attitude of abundance. The Lord is my Shepherd! I have everything I need. I shall not want. Want shall not be my portion because the Lord is my Shepherd. As children of God we must never surrender to the poverty mentality. “Your servant has nothing there at all?” Really? It may be small, but you have something. And what you have is enough for God to take you to where He wants you to be if you are willing to walk by faith. God is calling you to walk by faith, not by sight; trusting in what He can do with what you have rather than focusing on what you have. God’s provision does not depend on what you have but on you submitting what you have to Him. For this woman it was “a small jar of olive oil.”

In this time of maximizing opportunities for wealth creation, ask yourself, “what is my small jar of olive oil?” Sometimes it may be so small that you think it is insignificant. The woman actually thought it was nothing so her first statement was she said “Your servant has nothing there at all!” You need to go before God in prayer and seek Him to reveal to you where the “small jar of oil” is hidden in your life, in your house. It might just be a talent you have long buried deep in your mind that you see yourself as having nothing at all. The good news is that God Himself left you with something in your life that you still need to develop. Ask. Seek. Knock and the door will be opened to you. Remember the woman thought she had nothing until she cried to the man of God. It is when you come before the Lord that you will receive a revelation of what your “small jar of olive oil” is or where it is hidden, waiting to be put into action.

EG White says, “The talents, however few, are to be put to use. The question that most concerns us is not, How much have I received? but, What am I doing with that which I have? The development of all our powers is the first duty we owe to God and to our fellow men. No one who is not growing daily in capability and usefulness is fulfilling the purpose of life. In making a profession of faith in Christ we pledge ourselves to become all that it is possible for us to be as workers for the Master, and we should cultivate every faculty to the highest degree of perfection, that we may do the greatest amount of good of which we are capable.” – {COL 329.2}

The call to maximize our opportunities for wealth creation is first and foremost a call to develop all our God given talents, spiritual, natural and acquired.

That is maximizing opportunities given to us by God. Another author explains maximizing opportunity as follows: “Maximizing opportunities is an essential part of achieving success and realizing one's full potential. This entails being active in looking for and capitalizing on

every opportunity that arises, being receptive to new ideas and willing to take calculated risks to make them happen.”

Remember God provides for the faithful even in desperate circumstances. Your gift is your opportunity. Your faith will help you maximize it for the glory of God. Allow God to transform your financial situation and show you what you have in your house. It is the will of God that you get wisdom and know how to create wealth for the kingdom of God. The kingdom mindset is a mind of abundance not scarcity. Do an evaluation of what you have and present it to God to show you how to multiply it for His glory.

In conclusion, “Maximizing opportunities for wealth creation involves a combination of strategic planning, disciplined execution, and a mindset geared toward long-term growth.” Below is a designed outline to help guide this process: And it starts with developing a wealth-building mindset or a kingdom mindset.

Think long term: Focus on compounding returns and sustainable habits. Do not just live for the moment, but plan long term. Some body has said, plan as if you will be here for one hundred years, but live as if Christ is coming tomorrow.

Take calculated risks: Be willing to step outside of your comfort zone after assessing risks. Do not bury your talent for fear of losing it. Those who always observe the sky may never plant anything. Seek information in whichever area you choose to venture into in your effort to maximize your opportunities for wealth creation.

Invest in yourself: Knowledge, skills, and health are foundational assets. Read books. Google how what you want to do is done. Visit and talk with those who have done it but do not be discouraged. Trust in the Lord. Do not surrender to the spirit of laziness. It is the surest way to poverty.

Proverbs 6:9-1. How long will you lie there, you sluggard? When will you get up from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest —and poverty will come on you like a thief and scarcity like an armed man.

Remember. Trust in the Lord and lean not in your own understanding. It is God who calls you to life of abundance and it is Him who knows what is “your small jar of olive oil is.” It is Him who gives you wisdom to create well for His own glory. This because He loves you and you are His steward. He longs to accomplish great things through you. Jesus saved you and prepared you for good works, Ephesians 2:10. So you must answer this question today: “What do you have in your house?”

I WILL GO

Maximizing opportunities for Wealth Creation Part 3

Deuteronomy 8:18 (*NIV*)

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Part 3. Gather the empty vessels:

What are opportunities according to the Bible?

As one of our definitions suggests a divine opportunity is "a good chance for advancement or progress." Ephesians 3:20 reminds us that in Christ all opportunities are made possible or turned into a blessing. In Christ, our opportunities are made achievable goals, far beyond our wildest dreams and expectation.

Following Divine instruction is key to maximizing opportunities for wealth creation. God gives you wisdom to create wealth. A large part of that wisdom is in listening to His word, receiving His word and obeying His word. God is in His word. God has exalted His word above all His name. Psalms 138:2. It is the word of God that sets you a part as His person. It is the word of God that sanctifies you. John 17:17, 15:3. His word is your life. John 6:62-63. The word of God is active and powerful, Hebrews 4:12. After crying to the servant of God the woman receives the word: Get empty vessels! That can be disturbing if you are not sure of who is speaking. She could have wondered in her heart and said, but this is not what I want. I need money to pay my husband's debts, not empty vessels. I do not need empty vessels." If she had doubted the man of God she would have missed the greatest miracle of her life. She listened. She obeyed.

If you want to maximize your opportunities for wealth creation you will have to be receptive to new ideas. You cannot continue to work like you have done before. You will have to listen to God again and discern what God is birthing in your life. Empty your mind of the way you have always done things and open up to new ideas. God works best with empty vessels, willing to be filled. Try new methods of gardening if that is where your talent lies. Instead of walking long distances to take twenty miserable cattle to go and graze at the lake several miles away from home why not try zero grazing. Why not plant a new crop you have not tried before? Be open to new ideas. Some ideas sound crazy. Get empty vessels. When God gives you an idea, do not doubt it. If it is from God it will work. But you have to take time to work it out. Understand what God is telling you to do.

Submit to the process of reaching your desired goal. God does not work with quick fixes. God does not want you to gamble with your life. Gambling is not kingdom lifestyle. Kingdom wealth does not come through gambling, ‘sport pesa’ or anything like that. No child of God participates in such activities. Submit to God’s process of wealth creation. The woman could have argued with Elisha about the empty vessels. It did not make sense to gather empty vessels when the one she had was almost empty. Why don’t you just give me money to go and buy vessels full of oil in them? What I need is oil, money, not empty vessels. She did not do that. She submitted herself to the wisdom of the prophet. Before you get the blessing there is a process and preparation. Preparation is key to everything if you want to succeed.

Now remember whatever God asks you to do put all your heart into it. Maximize it. Get very many vessels, not just a few! God moves in large ways beyond our imagination. When God begins to move in your favor know that He moves in large ways. He is a King and He gives like a King. So, get very many vessels. Be like Jabez who asked God to enlarge His territory greatly. When doing business with God do not settle for small things. Do not disappoint God by asking for small things. That is why when you come to God you need your mind to be transformed so that you begin to think big and to ask big so that you may glorify His name. Your financial freedom is for the glory of God, not self. When you become a giver, and not a borrower, you begin to magnify God in your life. God is a giver. All good things come from Him and He gives abundantly. He wants you to align your will with His will so that He begins to accomplish things through you. He wants you to create wealth that blesses others. He says get very many vessels, not a few. Cooperate with God and get many vessels.

Notice there were so many empty vessels lying in people’s homes. Every empty vessel is an opportunity waiting to be maximized. There are many people standing in the streets daily waiting for something to happen to change their lives, not knowing that Christ has already sent an invitation for them to be gathered into His kingdom. Everyone that joins himself or herself to God will have something useful to do for a living. It is the will of God that man should work for six days and rest only on the Sabbath. Every child of God is called upon to gather empty vessels that Christ may fill them with the oil of the Holy Spirit and give them gifts for service. Will you gather some empty vessels for Jesus today?

The three S of preparation are **Submission** to a process, **Sensitivity** to the opportunities that God has placed around you; and **Serving** where God has positioned you to serve in time.

Ask yourself these questions: “Am I submitting myself to a process? What kind of process am I submitting myself to? How sensitive am I to the opportunities that God has placed around me? Am I serving the way God wants me to serve? Am I serving where God wants me to serve? Am I serving what God wants me to serve? Is there a purpose am to serve? Am I serving that purpose?” (Lara, G. Adedeji: Understanding the place of preparation in maximizing opportunities. Article Source: <https://centrendl.org/blog/maximizing-opportunities/>)

I WILL GO

Maximizing opportunities for Wealth Creation Part 4
SHUT THE DOOR BEHIND YOU!

Deuteronomy 8:18 (NIV.)

But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.

Ephesians 5:15-16

Be very careful, then, how you live —not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

2 Kings 4:1-7

The Widow's Olive Oil

The wife of a man from the company of the prophets cried out to Elisha, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that he revered the LORD. But now his creditor is coming to take my two boys as his slaves."

Elisha replied to her, "How can I help you? Tell me, what do you have in your house?"

"Your servant has nothing there at all," she said, "except a small jar of olive oil."

Elisha said, "Go around and ask all your neighbors for empty jars. Don't ask for just a few. Then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour oil into all the jars, and as each is filled, put it to one side."

She left him and shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her and she kept pouring. When all the jars were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another one."

But he replied, "There is not a jar left." Then the oil stopped flowing.

She went and told the man of God, and he said, "Go, sell the oil and pay your debts. You and your sons can live on what is left."

Shut the door behind you:

Shut the door behind you: Learn to be alone with God (God works in the secret place of the heart. Do not allow distractions when waiting for a miracle)

Pour the oil into empty vessels: obedience is our part. Multiplication is God's work.

We are talking about maximizing opportunity for wealth creation. We are looking into the situation of this poor widow who found herself in a very difficult situation where the debtor was coming to take her children into slavery to pay for her husband's debts. We have seen that sometimes one member of the family can act in a manner that puts at risk the entire family. It is better to remain poor than to owe people money. The good news, however, is that no situation is too difficult for the Lord to turn around. No matter how poor you may be, if you are ready to follow God's instructions you can turn things around for you and your family. It is God who gives you wisdom to create wealth. Deuteronomy 8:18. The Lord wants you to work hard and have enough for you and to share with others. But you must learn to put God first in your life and to look to Him alone as your source. Secondly you must be ready to follow God's word. For a man's life does not depend on the possessions he has acquired. Man does not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

Shut the door behind you! The poor widow cried to God for help and God heard her cry. God will hear your cry for help. He is not a respecter of persons. What He has done for others He will do for you also. But you must learn to trust in Him. You must learn to walk with Him. You must learn to be alone with God so that you may focus on Him alone. Learn to shut the door behind you. Learn to be alone with God. God works in the secret place of the heart. Do not allow distractions when waiting for a miracle. Satan will attack you with voices of doubt in your heart and questions with no answer. He will try to discourage you about the project God has put in your heart. Nobody has done it before. It does not make sense. The enemy will bombard you with negative thoughts and if you are not careful you may give up and miss the miracle.

God was about to do some great miracle in the life of this widow. You might think that this was the time to invite everybody in the village to come and see what God was about to do. Not at all. The instruction is shut the door behind you. Be alone with God. Being alone with God is

something that many do not know. Alone with God is time for self-inspection and repentance. It is time for personal revival. It is time to see God like you have never done before! It's time for intimacy with God. You shut out everybody out of your life and remain with God so that you may commune with Him. That is the place where miracles happen.

Shut the door behind you. There are times when you do not need to share the idea that God has given you because it might just sound too crazy to others. Some dreams are too big that if you start sharing them carelessly you may create enemies for nothing. Remember what happened when Joseph shared his dreams with his brothers? When God gives you a business idea you may need to shut the door behind you. Lock yourself in with your little jar and the very many empty vessels. God's projects are faith projects. They may seem very unreasonable. You may not understand what God is doing but you need to obey His voice. Picture this woman and her son locked in a room with a jar of oil and very many empty vessels! If you have been observing her lately you might think that she is taking her grief a little too far. The village women may start talking about her and her empty vessels: 'I went to visit with her today and guess what I found? She is locked in with empty vessels and she is not talking.' When God gives you a crazy idea follow it, as long as you know that it is from God.

The prophet said shut the door behind you and your son and pour the oil into the empty vessels. If one is full put it aside and pour oil into the next one. Simple instructions. I love it. When you learn to trust in God your life will be very simple. God wants to simplify your life. Walking with God is simply obeying simple instructions. When God speaks that is enough! He is God Almighty. Nothing is too hard for Him. His word is power. If you want fullness of joy in your life then learn to obey His word. Learn to take God at his word. How do you pour oil from this little oil jar of yours into this very many big vessels that you have collected from the village? Just do it because God said it. The principle of walking with God in a life full of joy and free from cares is this: God said it. I believe it. And that is enough! God told Jeremiah that He stands behind His word to fulfill it. He told Isaiah that the words that His word shall not return to Him void but shall fulfill that for which He has sent it.

Isaiah 55:10-11

As the rain and the snow
come down from heaven,
and do not return to it
without watering the earth
and making it bud and flourish,
so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,
so is my word that goes out from my mouth:
It will not return to me empty,
but will accomplish what I desire
and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

The first and also the highest level of wealth creation is to be rich in the word of God. His word is only lasting riches that you must have before you turn to material wealth. For heaven and earth shall pass away but His word abides forever. Let His word abide in you richly and the rest will follow. His word is the wealth of His kingdom. Living the kingdom life is first and foremost being rich in His word. Colossians 3:16 says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." In John 15:7 Jesus Christ said,

"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you." In Matthew 6:31-33, He said, "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

Is it not good to know that God Himself knows what you need? The abundant life that Christ gives is worry free. Anxiety about wealth is forbidden by God. Phil 4:6-7. Follow God's instruction and your life will be full of joy. There are people who are rich in things of this world but there is no joy in their life. A life that is built on the word of God is rich in joy and peace.

Pour the oil into the empty vessels. Do not try to make sense out of the word of God . His word is the highest sense possible! You are called to simply believe it. Our God is a God of multiplication. Whatever you put in His Hands He will multiply for His glory. It is not how much you have but how much are you willing to lay at the feet of Jesus for Him to multiply. The little shepherd boy gave Him five loaves of bread and two fishes and that was enough. The song writer said, "Little is much when God is it." Little with obedience is much. For God obedience is enough. He told King Saul, that "obedience is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams." 1Samuel 15:22.

The woman shut the door behind her and started pouring the oil into the empty vessels. The first one filled up and she put it aside and smiled. I guess she said wow! Bring another vessel. Somewhere along the line she began to sing "Jesus loves me this I know!"

Is there not another vessel? Another empty vessel? And there was none and so the oil stopped. What a sad day when the oil stops simply because there was not another empty vessel. Here was an opportunity to be the riches woman in the village, yes in the entire country but she missed it. Wealth was always around her even when she thought that her sons were going to be taken as slaves. They should not even have borrowed money in the first place because the jar of oil was there. Even for you the jar of oil is there! Find it. It is something you always wanted to do. It is your jar of oil. It is what God has put in your heart. God has given you a gift. He gave gifts to men. To each one God has given a gift for ministry, Ephesians 4:8. You have it. Use it. Stop crying to God and start pouring your oil into empty vessels. The world is full of empty vessels waiting for the oil of the Holy Spirit to be poured into them so that they may live the abundant life in Christ. But the oil is in your jar and you are not even aware of it.

Go in your inner chamber and shut the door and start seeking the Lord in prayer and deep communion with Him. That is the secret place of prayer where ideas for ministry and wealth creation are born. If you cannot see your empty jar then pray until you get it. Time has come for the children of God to move away from the life of scarcity into the abundant life of the kingdom of God. Spiritual wealth and material wealth. But first the spiritual riches in the word of God. Be rich in obedience. Rich in holiness unto the Lord. Rich in a life of humility in the presence of God. Rich in the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom. Out of wisdom comes material wealth as well. For it is God who gives you the wisdom to create wealth. Wisdom brings riches and honor. You can be rich but without honor. You have no respect in the society and before God because your riches are ill gotten through worldly wisdom. But the wisdom that comes from the fear of God has both riches and honor.

Proverbs 3:13-17.

Happy is the man, who finds wisdom,
And the man who gains understanding; For her proceeds are better than the profits of silver,
And her gain than fine gold.
She is more precious than rubies,
And all the things you may desire cannot compare with her.
Length of days is in her right hand,
In her left hand riches and honor.
Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths are peace.

More than a hundred years ago, a British revivalist spoke the words to Dwight L. Moody that would transform Moody's approach to life — words of challenge that echo across every generation: "The world has yet to see what God will do with and for and through and in and by the man who is fully and wholly consecrated to Him."

If we give more of ourselves to God, God will give more of Himself to us. God is today calling each one of us to go and share the everlasting gospel with others. He is calling us to invite others to a Spirit filled life. We are the little jars with the oil in us. The Holy Spirit is the oil that will make others rich in faith. But we must be willing to be emptied of all self that God may fill us first before we can be used to fill others. Once again, the world longs to see a revival like never before. It is a revival of true godliness in the Church of the Living God. It is time for us to shut the door behind us and communion with God in the inner chamber of the soul. Shut the door against immorality and worldliness. Shut the door against the spirit of doubt and idolatry. Shout the door against worldly pleasure and the love for amusements. Shut the door against laziness and procrastination. If you will see the miracles of God again in your life then you will have to shut the door behind you. Remember power belongs to God but your cooperation and obedience is needed.

If we align our will with the will of God it becomes omnipotent and through faith in Him nothing shall be impossible for us, (cf. COL 333-4).

Chapter 2

STEWARSHIP

THEME:

MAXIMIZING OPPORTUNITIES (FOR WEALTH CREATION)

Day One

Created to create

KEY TEXT: Genesis 1:28. Then God blessed them and said to them, ‘be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’ NKJV

Impressive facts at the onset.

1. The first place the word ‘bless’ appears in the Holy book is at creation in environmental maximization context
2. The voice/ word comes from the creator himself.
3. The scope or space where man is to operate blessed is spelt out i. e. the earth, the sea and the air.

Oxford Dictionary defines opportunity as ‘*a time or set of circumstances that makes it possible to do something*.

The verse considered here has five imperatives or cardinal assignments ordained by God. When God gives command or order out of his love and kindness, he also supplies the capacity to perform it.

Man is created 1:26 a functioning being settled in a work friendly environment to function 2:15. He is created with the first deposit, out of existing matter, in the image and likeness of the maker- making him a unique opportunity able to make/create by maximize normal opportunities. Here lies the key explanation for the imperatives.

A. **Be Fruitful**= This word as used in scriptures denotes produce in general (according to Easton’s Bible dictionary) fruitfulness is the product of life itself (james E. Rossrup 1969). You find fruit used in the Bible widely as, FRUIT = of the spirit, flesh, righteousness, of the land and even of the womb. It ought to be seen in its broad inference. In Gen 1:28 the conjunction ‘and’ gives each word a reasonable space to convey full import.

Man as a steward is commanded to be fruitful i.e be productive as he functions.

B. **Multiply**= this seems to imply producing of children in the primary sense but the word ‘rabah’ used means to be or become much, many or great. The primitive root means to increase in whatever respect. The multiplication principle and effect are part of the components that man is endowed with at creation. This is the reason that whatever man invests his sweat and time in has growth effect.

Man as a steward was created with the blessing of multiplication.

C. **Fill the earth**- simple and express understanding is to populate. It would be interesting to ask how many times would God say one thing by reading= fruitful, multiply and fill the earth in limited one sense (progeny). The Hebrew word ‘male’ has the primitive root meaning as to fill ,to be full of, used to imply accomplish. The thought here is to mean that man was given command to fill not only with children but largely to manufacture and increase.

Man is commanded to fill the environment with the results of productive labour.

- D. **Subdue-** ‘kabash’ is more of a military term which means to bring to control or to conquer. It could be easy to relate with this verb if we look at it from the fall-perspective. The world being difficult and must be subdued to bring produce(remember the thorns and thistles Gen. 3:17-19). Man was built with the capacity to subdue his environment to fill his store.a steward gets the right bearing when he/she exerts the power of conquest on the environment to give forth result of planned labour.
- E. **Dominion=** the Heb ‘radah’ to rule,control or to dominate. Man in the image and likeness of God who is King was created with power inherent to rule as a steward the estate of God.

These five imperatives/commands (verbs-action words) communicate to the fact that God created man with the qualities and abilities to grow his economy within the space and time. Maximizing opportunity/ies is a divinely ordained assignment. The work of redemption is aimed at full restoration of man. Man that will glorify God through wealth creation for mission and human dignity. Jesus in Matt 6:33 gave a glowing echo when he invites humanity to seek first the kingdom of God and his Righteousness = then the rest shall be added.

The kingdom and righteousness or better said Christianity unlocks once potential which results in the increase called ALL THESE.

The clarion call we have as a church in this times is to create wealth and be self-reliant. Before we look for capital elsewhere, we must recognize the rich deposit in us to subdue to dominate, produce fruit and multiply for the glory of God and mission.

The command was given in the context of a defined environment, man has to dominate the land, the water space and the air. These are the depositories of God’s marvelous wealth for humanity.

The spirit of prophecy agrees to this principle, E. G. White in her book Ministry of Healing emphasized that the importance of individuals learning to work for themselves, develop practical skills, and be resourceful in providing for their needs. She also encouraged a balance between self-reliance and dependence on God, highlighting that while we should do our part, we must always recognize God's role as the ultimate provider.

Appeal:

Arise the people of God arise, Jesus is coming soon, we have a solemn duty to accomplish. The mission burden is laid on our shoulder as a church. There is need for resources both at home and at church. Let every believer arise, the potential to subdue, dominate and bring fruit to multiply is in you. Face the land or the waters or the space in the air and capture the deposit God put for your growth and your church. Do something, do anything for the glory of God Ecclesiastes 9:10 ‘whatever your hand finds to do’

God bless you, God bless

BUILDING WEALTH GOD'S WAY

DAY TWO

Definition of Wealth

- ✓ A large amount of money or valuable possessions that someone has (Cambridge Dictionary)
- ✓ Abundance of valuable material possessions or resources (Webster Dictionary)
- ✓ Abundance, encompassing not only material possessions like money, land, and property, but also spiritual and relational wealth (Biblical Definition- 1st Tim 6: 17-19)

What does God say about Wealth?

There is a common myth in society that wealth is evil. More money, more problems. We see people murdering, stealing, lying, manipulating, and the like all for the sake of more money and more power.

The Bible does not condemn the rich man because he is rich, it does not declare the acquisition of wealth to be a sin, nor does it say that money is the root of all evil. On the contrary, the Scriptures state that it is God who gives the power to get wealth (CS 138.2).

It is the love of money that the word of God denounces as the root of all evil (1st Tim 6:10). Money itself is the gift of God to men, to be used with fidelity in His service. Throughout the Bible wealth is a divine blessing to those who are obedient to God and whom He can trust with it. God blessed Abraham, and made him rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. And the Bible states, as an evidence of divine favor, that God gave David, Solomon, Job, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, very much riches and honor (CS 139.1).

How does God want us to build our wealth?

We use the term **WEALTH** to discover God's intention on the possessions He has given us.

W- Wisdom; Start with Prayer and asking God for wisdom. Pray for a heart that will be obedient to God. Pray for a heart that will honor Him with your wealth. Ask Him to block anything that will tear you away from Him, even if it's wealth itself.

E – Embrace; Embrace your finances by having a relationship with your finances. You have to know your finances and not avoid them. Open up all your accounts and know how much money you have. Take account of all your debts. This will help with budgeting and controlling your spending.

Counsels on Stewardship, page 150: "It is not the will of God that His people should be poor. He has provided means for them to be comfortable, and to do good. It is the mismanagement of their means, the disregard of economy, and the indulgence of appetite that brings them into poverty."

A – Attainable; Set attainable goals. Setting attainable goals is a cornerstone of diligent planning as well as the path to financial success.

Financial fitness is not a pipe dream or a state of mind it's a reality if you are willing to pursue it and embrace it ~ Will Robinson

Our goals can only be reached through a vehicle of a plan in which we must fervently believe, and upon which we must vigorously act ~ Pablo Picasso

L – Little is much when God is in it; Zechariah 4:10 speaks against despising small beginnings or seemingly insignificant efforts. It highlights that God's presence and watchful eye are upon even the smallest endeavors, implying that He can bring great things from them. The Lord works through humble instrumentalities. He does not despise the day of small things. Little is much when God is in it (Christ's Object Lessons, page 367).

This also calls for patience a fruit of the spirit as emphasized in Proverbs 21: 15 the plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty, and Proverbs 13: 11 dishonest money dwindles away, but whoever gathers money little by little makes it grow. Don't expect things to come overnight. For as quickly as wealth comes, it can also fly away.

T – Temperance - The Bible talks about wealth being a cruel master. Hebrews 13:10 calls us to be content with what we have for God himself will never leave you nor forsake you. 1 Timothy 6:17-19 emphasizes that true security and enjoyment come from God, not wealth. The temperance here lies in:

- ✓ **Humility:** Not being arrogant because of wealth.
- ✓ **Right Focus:** Placing hope in God, not in uncertain riches.
- ✓ **Stewardship:** Using wealth for good deeds, being generous and willing to share, rather than hoarding or indulging. This demonstrates a controlled and balanced approach to financial resources, recognizing their transient nature and their purpose for God's glory and the good of others.

"The love of money is the root of all evil. Many who make a profession of godliness are sacrificing the principles of truth and righteousness to gain means. The desire for money has led them to dishonesty, to fraud, and to oppression. It has led them to use their talents, their capabilities, and their time, in accumulating wealth, when they should have been employing all their powers for the glory of God and the uplifting of humanity. The very best talents and capabilities of many are devoted to the service of Mammon, when they should be devoted to God. What a perversion of ability! What a waste of valuable time!" — Counsels on Stewardship, p. 222

H – Honor; Honor God with what you have. Proverbs 3: 9-10 Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine. This verse clearly links honoring God with our material wealth. When we prioritize God in our financial dealings, particularly by giving Him the "first fruits" (implying a portion set aside before other expenses), there is a promise of blessing and abundance. This isn't a transactional guarantee of wealth, but rather a principle that acknowledges God as the ultimate source of all blessings and encourages stewardship and generosity.

"God has committed to men talents, capabilities, and means. These are entrusted to them, not to be selfishly hoarded or spent, but to be used in carrying forward the work of God in the earth. The means that is spent for selfish gratification, or that is laid away in hoarding, is robbing God. He has made us His stewards, and He requires that we shall use our entrusted means for the advancement of His cause." - Counsels on Stewardship, p. 354.

We are God's stewards, responsible for using what He has given us to advance His cause in the world, which is a key aspect of honoring Him in our wealth-building endeavors.

Finally

Maximizing your wealth doesn't simply mean working harder and longer hours. It can mean being smarter with where you invest and your choice of vocation. And remember Psalms 127: 1-2 says Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain. In vain you rise early and stay up late toiling for food to eat—for he grants sleep to^[a] those he loves.

I WILL GO: MAXIMIZING THE OPPORTUNITY TO AVAIL MONEY FOR GOD'S COURSE

DAY THREE

1Sam 9:3-5 “Now the donkeys belonging to Saul’s father Kish were lost, and Kish said to his son Saul, “Take one of the servants with you and go and look for the donkeys.”

So Saul and his father’s servant passed through the hill country of **Ephraim** and through the area around **Shalisha**, but they did not find them. They went on into the district of **Shaalem**, but the donkeys were not there. Then he passed through the **territory of Benjamin**, but they did not find them.

The disappointing errand

When they reached the district of Zuph, Saul said to the servant who was with him, “Come, let’s go back, or my father will stop thinking about the donkeys and start worrying about us.” He determined to return to his father (v. 5), in consideration of his father’s tender concern for him, being apprehensive that if they stayed out any longer his aged father would begin to fear. They were close by the city where Samuel lived, and that put it into their heads to consult him (v. 6):

“Not so fast my lord.” answered the servant His servant proposed “*Not so fast my lord. There's a holy man in this town.*” In such a disappointing and discouraging errand, this servant of Kish used that opportunity to remain more religious than his master (Saul). Since they were now at Ramah, he reminded Saul that they should call on Samuel - The Prophet, and take his advice in this important affair.

Observe here:

- 1) This would mean that, the economic status of Kish was dwindling. It is easy to observe here that those who have must expect to lose.
- 2) They were close by the city where Samuel lived, and that put it into their heads to consult him (v. 6): “*There is a holy man in this town*” **Wherever we are, we should improve our opportunities of acquainting ourselves with those that are wise and good.**
- 3) The servant spoke very respectfully concerning Samuel, though he had no personal knowledge of him, but by common fame only: “*He is a man of God, and an honorable man.*” Men of God are honorable men, and should be so in our eyes. Acquaintance with the things of God, and serviceableness to the kingdom of God, put true honor upon men, and make them great. This was the honor of Samuel, as a man of God, that all he says comes surely to pass. This was observed concerning him when he was a young prophet (ch. 3:19).
- 4) Saul knew very well that it’s not in order to appear before the man of God or God Himself for consultation empty-handed. After Saul had asked the servant what they will give the man of God, “*The servant spoke up, Look, I just happen to have this silver coin! I'll give it to the holy man and he'll tell us how to proceed!*” (**1 Sam 9:8 -The Message Bible.**) As John Walton suggests that, “A quarter of a shekel of silver would have been the equivalent of a week or so of wages for the ordinary working man. This would be appropriate considering the value of the donkeys that had been lost.” (*IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament, Copyright © 2000 by John H. Walton, Victor H. Matthews and Mark W. Chavalas. Published by Inter-Varsity Press. All rights reserved.*).

In other words, the servant is saying, I made some money. I have my week salary or my full wage, let's go give it to the man of God that he may tell us our way. It seems as if the servant was concurring with the wise man who also said in, Eccl.10:19 that, "*Laughter and bread go together. And wine gives sparkle to life – But it's money that makes the world go around.*" – MB)

Sons and daughters of the Most High should have it clear that, money is the measure of all things and answers all things. Money commands all things. There will not be a house for us, nor a bed, nor clothing, nor provisions and portions for children without money.

Most people would rather be told their fortune than told their duty, how to be rich than how to be saved. If it were the business of the men of God to direct for the recovery of lost asses, they would be consulted much more than they are now that it is their business to direct for the recovery of lost souls; so preposterous is the care of most men! Spiritual feasts are made for spiritual nourishments, spiritual laughter, and holy joy in God, and money is an enabler.

Many a times, people love a cheap religion, and like it best when they can devolve the expense of it on others. "A people without money or money's worth is a people on the verge of starvation; no state can stand long whose population consist of paupers." (*The Pulpit Commentary Vol.9*) There will be no magnificent houses of God, nor running God's ministry if men have not enough of it. Feasts like Camp – meetings, Weeks of prayers, Weekly Sabbaths, and others related things cannot be run unless there is money for the necessary supports of life.

Money is a tool that must be, or its equivalent in material goods, and this should not be concentrated in the hand of a few individuals, but each member of the church should maximize all the opportunities he/she has to make money available for the work of the Lord.

DAY FOUR

TOPIC: GODLY LIFESTYLE

TEXT: PHILIPPIANS 4:11-13

I. INTRODUCTION

In the darkest days, when appearances seem most forbidding, fear not, have faith in God, He knows your need. He has all power. His infinite love and compassion never weary. Fear not that He will fail of fulfilling His promises. And he will bestow upon His faithful servants the measure of efficiency that their need demands.

II. FOCUS ON BEING CONTENTED WITH GOD'S DAILY PROVISIONS

- 1 Timothy 6:6-8, godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we be contented with that."
- Ecclesiastes 5:10 whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth in never satisfied with their income.
- Proverbs 30:8-9, "...give me neither poverty nor riches. Give me just enough to satisfy my needs. For if I grow rich I may become contented without God. And if I am too poor I may steal and thus insult God's holy name."
- Philippians 4:1-13, "...I have learnt to be contented whatever the circumstances."

III. YOU CANNOT SERVE GOD AND MONEY

You cannot serve God and money but you must learn to serve God "with" money.

- Luke 16:11-13 Jesus said "if you have not been trustworthy in worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? ...No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate one

and loves the other, or he will hold to the one and despise the other, you cannot serve both God and money."

- Proverbs 10:16, "the good man's earning advance the cause of righteousness. The evil man squanders his on sin."
- Mathew 6:19-21 Jesus said "do not store up your treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasures is there your heart will be also."

IV. THERE ARE DANGEROUS CONSEQUENCES IF YOU LIVE FOR PLEASURE

- Proverbs 21:17 realize that living for pleasure will impoverish you financially and spiritually.
- Proverbs 21:17, "he who loves pleasure will become poor."
- Galatians 6:7, if a man sows to please his own wrong desires, he will be planting seeds of evil and he will surely reap a harvest of spiritual decay and death.
- Ecclesiastes 2:10-11, "I denied nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure. Yet when I surveyed all what my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless."
- Ecclesiastes 7:4, a fool thinks only of having a good time now.
- 2 Timothy 3:1-6, "there will be terrible times in the last days, people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ...having a form of godliness but denying its power." When life is going on its unvarying round, when men are absorbed in pleasure, in business, in traffic, in money making. When religious leaders are magnifying the world's progress and enlightenment, and the people are lured in a false security, then as the midnight thief steals within the unguarded dwelling, so shall sudden destruction come upon the careless and ungodly, "and they shall not escape".

V. DON'T LIVE FOR THIS LIFE BUT FOR YOUR HEAVENLY HOME

Luke 16:9, Hebrews 11:13-16; 13:14-16, 1 Corinthians 3:12-15

How great will be the joy when the redeemed of the Lord shall meet, gather into the mansions prepared for them! Oh what rejoicing for all who have been committed, unselfish laborers together with God in carrying forward His work in the earth!

VI. PRACTICAL TIPS FOR GODLY LIFESTYLE ADJUSTMENTS

- Live simple and within your means. 1 Timothy 6:6-8
- Do not covet possessions of others Ephesians 5:3
- Follow this wise advice, "use it up, wear it out, and make it do or do without."
- Examine your home for evidence of hoarding. Luke 12:18)
- Give away anything that owns you. Matthew 19:21
- Avoid deceit, stick with the classic that are always in style. Colossians 2:8
- Analyze the cost of seemingly small expenditures such as eating out, buying brand new clothing, etc. these purchases can add up to substantial sums of money. Proverbs 27:24
- Be willing to pray before making special purchases. Give God the opportunity to lead you or provide for you in unexpected but more Affordable way.

Chapter 3

EVANGELISM

MAXIMISING OPPORTUNITIES TO CREATE RESOURCES.

DAY ONE INTRODUCTION

Definition

- Evangelism, or **witnessing**, is the act of sharing the Christian gospel, the message and teachings of Jesus Christ. It is typically done with the intention of converting others to Christianity. Evangelism can take several forms, such as personal conversations, preaching, media, and is especially associated with missionary work.
- Christians who specialize in evangelism are often known as **evangelists**, whether they are in their home communities or living as missionaries in the field, although some Christian traditions refer to such people as *missionaries* in either case. Some Christian traditions consider evangelists to be in a leadership position; they may be found preaching to large meetings or in governance roles. In addition, Christian groups who encourage evangelism are sometimes known as evangelistic or *evangelist*.
- The word *evangelist* comes from the Koine Greek word as εὐαγγέλιον *euangelion*). The Greek word εὐαγγέλιον originally meant a reward given to the messenger for good news (εὖ = "good", ἀνγέλω = "I bring a message"; the word "angel" comes from the same root) and later "good news" itself.
- The verb form of *euangelion*, (translated as "evangelism"), occurs rarely in older Greek literature outside the New Testament, making its meaning more difficult to ascertain. Parallel texts of the Gospels of Luke and Mark reveal a synonymous relationship between the verb *euangelizo* (εὐαγγελίζω) and a Greek verb *kerusso* (κηρύσσω), which means "to proclaim".
- Evangelism is the practice of sharing the Christian gospel, or the message of Jesus Christ, with the goal of persuading others to become Christians. This can involve preaching, teaching, personal conversations, or using media to communicate the Christian message.
- According to the Bible, Evangelism is understood as the act of proclaiming and sharing the "good news" of Jesus Christ, with the aim of persuading others to believe and follow him. It involves sharing the message of salvation through faith in Jesus and the need for repentance and turning from sin.
- Here are some specific verses and their significance in the context of evangelism: Jesus commanded it (Matt. 16:15)
- The apostles also commanded it (2 Tim. 4:2,5) Through evangelism many people would be encouraged; because the gospel is the Good News Evangelism is an opportunity to work directly with (and for) God (Lk. 10:2). It precedes baptism and salvation (Mk. 16:16). It proves our love for our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ (Jn. 15:12-14). Evangelism opens the door for healing to take place (Luke 10:9). It is the gateway of repentance and remission of sins (Lk. 24:47). Brings understanding of Scriptures unto humanity (Acts 8:30). Evangelism causes the Holy Ghost to move (Acts 10:44).

- It is a fruit of righteousness (Pro. 11:30).
 - This verse outlines the "Great Commission," instructing believers to share the gospel message with everyone.
 - *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.* **Matthew 28:19–20**
 - How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" Romans 10:14–15
 - The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and whoever captures souls is wise. Proverbs 11:30
 - When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." Matthew 9:36–38.
 - This verse speaks of receiving power from the Holy Spirit to be witnesses of Jesus, starting in Jerusalem and Judea, then Samaria, and ultimately to the ends of the earth. Acts 1:8:
 - This verse highlights the power of the gospel as a means of salvation for all who believe, regardless of their background. Romans 1:16:
 - And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. 1 Corinthians 2:1–5
 - For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith. Romans 1:16–17.
 - Believers are encouraged to always be prepared to give a defense for the hope that they have, showing respect and gentleness while sharing their faith. 1 Peter 3:15:
 - Paul's approach to evangelism, where he became a servant to all people, adapting his communication to reach diverse audiences. 1 Corinthians 9:19–23:
 - Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 2 Corinthians 5:20
 - Paul instructs Timothy to preach the word, be ready in season and out of season, and do the work of an evangelist. 2 Timothy 4:2:
 - This verse encourages proclaiming the Lord's name and making known His deeds among the nations.
- Isaiah 12:4:

DAY TWO

The SDA church employs various evangelism approaches, including direct preaching, apologetics, testimonials, relational evangelism, invitational evangelism, and service-based evangelism. These approaches can be categorized as styles or modes, each with its strengths and how individuals can effectively share the gospel message. Additionally, the SDA church utilizes the message approach of Revelation 14:6-12, which distinguishes its meetings and provides a prophetic basis for evangelism.

Here's a more detailed look at some of the key evangelism approaches:

Styles/Modes of Evangelism:

1. Direct Evangelism:

This involves directly preaching the gospel, often to a group, with a clear intention of teaching or sharing the good news.

2. Apologetic Evangelism:

This approach uses logical arguments and evidence to defend biblical truths and beliefs.

3. Testimonial Evangelism:

Sharing personal stories and experiences of faith and how God has impacted one's life.

4. Relational Evangelism:

Building relationships and sharing the gospel through conversations and everyday interactions.

5. Invitational Evangelism:

Encouraging people to participate in church activities and events to learn more about the faith.

6. Service/Life-based Evangelism:

- **Adventist Community Services**
- This is the humanitarian wing of the Adventist Church.
- Adventist Community Services reaches out to local communities to offer any kind of practical help to people in need who may be facing difficult or unexpected circumstances and challenges.
- These may scale from individuals, families, to whole neighborhoods.
- Such services include:
 - Partnering with other humanitarian agencies like ADRA, RED CROSS to provide aid when disasters strike.
 - Community development to promote self-sufficiency.
 - Providing spiritual and emotional care to members of the community during stressful times.
 - Tutoring and mentoring students and youth to develop and strengthen basic life skills.
 - Addressing the needs of the elderly and their caregivers within the community.

- Again, all these efforts tend to draw people's hearts and minds to Jesus. As they see Christ's followers help them when in need, they get interested in learning more about the one whom they claim as the Lord of their lives.

7. Natural Mode:

Sharing the gospel in everyday conversations and through natural interactions.

8. Body Mode:

Participating in activities that demonstrate faith and lead to sharing the gospel.

9. Ministry Mode:

Engaging in organized and structured evangelism efforts, such as evangelistic meetings or outreach programs.

- **Open-air preaching:** Sharing the gospel in public spaces.
- **Literature evangelism:** Distributing religious literature and sharing the gospel through printed materials.
- **Media evangelism:** Utilizing radio, television, and internet platforms to share the gospel. These involve Christ-centered radio broadcasts and Adventist television programming around the world.
- Such include:

Hope Channel

Adventist News Network

The Voice of Prophecy

Breath of Life

It Is Written

Life Talk Radio, AWR.

And with the digital age, all these are now branching into online ministry.

- **Personal Evangelism:** Sharing the gospel with individuals one-on-one.
- **Prophetic Evangelism:** Using prophecy to demonstrate God's power and truths.
- **Creation Evangelism:** Using the study of creation to point people to God.
- **Archaeology Evangelism:** Utilizing archaeological discoveries to support biblical accounts.
- The SDA church encourages its members to use a variety of these approaches to share the gospel effectively and reach people in their communities.

ASI

- Motto, Sharing Christ in the marketplace
- This is where Adventist professionals engage in evangelism at their secular places of employment.
- Adventist-laymen's Services and Industries (ASI) brings such members together. It's an organization of ministries, businesses and professionals. Together, they explore ways to share Christ's love and truth in the workplace.
- They learn to weave spiritual conversations into regular interactions with workmates and clients.
- With all these ways to evangelize, each Adventist can take his/her part in the great commission.

- They have resources, tools, and methods to be a blessing to almost anyone they may encounter.
- And standing on such vantage ground, they stop at nothing in their zeal—zeal to share the love and truth that has transformed their own lives. This love and truth fires up a desire in them to help everyone find the joy of salvation and of knowing Christ.
- If you know of this joy, then you understand this kind of zeal that Adventists have for evangelism. And you may want to look again at the various ways they evangelize today and make your pick!

DAY THREE

PLANNING A VERY SUCCESSFUL EVANGELISTIC CAMPAIGN.

Evangelistic survey

- Identifying a venue.
- Identifying good capturing side.
- Identifying religious background.
- Economic background.
- Academic background.
- Identifying a good season.
- Political background.
- Discover local community needs/ compassionate.
- Develop programming to help meet those needs.

ORGANIZING PLANNING COMMITTEES.

- Budget committee.
- Pulpit committee.
- Accommodation committee.
- Food services committee.
- Choir committee.
- Public relation committee.
- Security committee.

Involving members-TMI.

- Preparing the Guests in advance,
- Members spiritual revival.
- Members role in Visitation.
- Preparing for Baptismal candidates.
- Every member is encouraged to make friendship.
- TimeLine of preparation, one-year maximum and six months minimum.
- Responsibility of follow-up Spiritual parenting,
- Formation of Small Groups.

Advertisement.

- Communicate discuss and publicize evangelistic through Radio and TV Advertising, posters, Banners, road shows, phone calls.
- Handbill handing.
- Friends, neighborhood, Relatives, work mates, school mates.

EVANGELISTIC TOPICS.

The creation.

- Fall of Lucifer.
- Fall of man.
- Salvation.
- The inspire word of God.
- True baptism. The Lords Supper.
- The laws of God.
- Daniel 7.
- Second coming.

- Signs of his coming.
- The true Church Revelation 12.
- The counterfeit Church Revelation 17.
- Millennium (1000 years).
- Final Judgement.
- Righteousness by faith.
- Sure word of Prophecy.
- The true Sabbath.
- Daniel 2.

TEAM WORK

- Preparing the Facilitators in advance.
- Training members.
- Members spiritual revival.
- Ushers team.
- Baptismal team.
- Advertisement team.
- Evangelistic Visitation team.
- Choir Team.

NURTURE AND RETENTION

- Lead the congregation into spiritual renewal, allowing the Holy Spirit to give each member a greater burden for souls.
- Evangelistic Visitation and Care of New Believers.
- Recruit experienced and responsible members to serve as mentors to newer members. (GMPS).
- Responsibility of follow-up Spiritual Friends
Formation of Small Groups Preparing for Baptismal candidates.
- Responsibility of follow-up Spiritual parents.
- Formation of Small Groups, Equip members for service.
- Develop as many as possible friendships and spiritual parents.

DAY FOUR

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT FOR EFFECTIVE OUTREACH.

- Economic empowerment means giving individuals and communities the resources and opportunities they need to control and manage their financial lives, improve their economic well-being, and challenge existing power structures. It focuses on equipping people with the skills, knowledge, and opportunities to improve their financial stability and have a greater say in economic decision-making.
- Here's a more detailed look at what economic empowerment entails:
- Key aspects of economic empowerment:

Access to resources:

This includes financial services like loans and savings, as well as access to productive assets like land and equipment.

Control over resources:

Individuals should have the ability to manage and distribute their resources, including income, investments, and property.

Voice and agency:

Economic empowerment allows individuals to have a say in economic decision-making at all levels, from their own businesses to shaping economic policies.

Challenging inequalities:

It can also empower marginalized groups to challenge existing power structures and advocate for their rights, especially in the context of women's economic empowerment.

Improved economic well-being:

Empowerment can lead to higher incomes, better access to healthcare, and improved living standards.

Sustainable development:

By empowering individuals and communities, economic empowerment can contribute to more equitable and sustainable economic growth.

Examples of economic empowerment:

Providing microfinance loans to entrepreneurs.

Ensuring Men/ Women have equal access to education and employment.

Empowering communities to manage their own resources and participate in local development projects.

Promoting policies that address gender inequality and discrimination in the workplace.

In essence, economic empowerment is about creating a level playing field where everyone has the opportunity to thrive economically and participate fully in society.

HORTICULTURE

- What is horticulture?
- Horticulture, derived from Latin words meaning "garden cultivation," is a branch of plant agriculture focused on garden crops like fruits, vegetables, and ornamental plants. It involves intensive commercial production, bridging the gap between domestic gardening and field agriculture.
- Horticultural farming, or horticulture, focuses on cultivating and managing crops in gardens or intensive farming settings, primarily including fruits, vegetables, and ornamental plants. It's a branch of agriculture that falls between domestic gardening and field agriculture, encompassing both food crops (like fruits and vegetables) and ornamental plants (like flowers).
- Horticulture is divided into:
 - * Pomology (fruit and nut crops)
 - * Olericulture (herbaceous plants for the kitchen)
 - * Floriculture (flowers and ornamental plants)
 - * Landscape horticulture (plants for the landscape).

The Bible mentions horticulture and gardening in several passages, emphasizing God's creation of plants and their importance in the lives of humans. Some key verses include Genesis 1:11-12, which describes God creating vegetation and trees, and Genesis 2:15, which highlights Adam's task of cultivating the Garden of Eden. Other verses, like Jeremiah 29:5, encourage planting gardens and eating their produce.

Here's a more detailed look at some relevant Bible verses:

Genesis 1:11-12:

"Then God said, 'Let the earth bring forth vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the earth that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.'"

Genesis 2:15:

"Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it."

Jeremiah 29:5:

"Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce."

1 Corinthians 3:6-7:

"I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow."

Isaiah 58:11:

"The Lord will continually guide you and satisfy your desire in scorched places. And he will give you strength; you will be like a watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail."

Matthew 6:28-30:

"Why do you worry about clothes? Consider how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his glory was dressed like one of them. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and gone tomorrow, will he not much more clothe you?"

DAIRY FARMING

- Investing in dairy farming can be a good way to build wealth, but it requires careful planning and a long-term perspective. Focus on maximizing income through milk sales, breeding, and value-added products.
- **Operational Costs:**
- **Feed:** Provide a balanced diet of silage, hay, and concentrates to optimize milk production.
- **Veterinary Care:** Regular health checks, vaccinations, and treatments are essential for maintaining herd health.
- **Labor:** Hiring workers for milking, feeding, and general farm maintenance is crucial.
- **Strategic Investments:**
- **Cow Comfort:** Ensure a comfortable environment for the cows to maximize milk production.
- **Reproductive Technology:** Utilize advanced technologies like AI to improve breeding and herd productivity.
- **Digital Innovations:** Implement sensors to monitor cow activity and optimize management practices.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Practice sustainable farming techniques to reduce environmental impact.
 - ✓ **Revenue Diversification:** Explore value-added products like yogurt, cheese, and ghee to increase revenue streams.
 - ✓ **Maximizing Revenue:**
 - ✓ **Direct Sales:** Consider selling milk directly to consumers at a higher price.
 - ✓ **Value Addition:** Process milk into products like yogurt, cheese, and ghee for higher profits.
 - ✓ **Byproduct Sales:** Sell manure and biogas as additional income sources.
 - ✓ **Best Practices:**
 - ✓ **Choose the right breeds:** Select breeds that are suited to your climate and land.

- **Ensure feed availability and accessibility:** Develop strategies for sourcing and storing feed.
- **Proper animal husbandry:** Learn about proper care and management practices.
- **Effective marketing:** Develop a strategy for selling your products.
- **Business Plan:**
- **Financial Projections:** Develop a detailed business plan with realistic financial projections.
- **Record Keeping:** Keep accurate financial and management records.
- Bee keeping scientific name.

APICULTURE.

- ✓ The scientific term for beekeeping is apiculture. It refers to the practice of caring for and managing bee colonies, typically for the production of honey and other bee products, [according to the National Agricultural Library](#). The word "apiculture" comes from the Latin words "apis" (bee) and "culture" (cultivation). Potential Benefits of Investing in Apiculture:
- ✓ Investing in apiculture, or beekeeping, can be a profitable and sustainable venture, offering various product streams like honey, beeswax, propolis, and even bee venom. The [East African Community \(EAC\)](#) recognizes apiculture's potential for economic growth and diversification, highlighting opportunities in honey processing, beekeeping equipment manufacturing, and value-added products.
- ✓ The honey industry offers various employment opportunities across the supply chain, from beekeeping and harvesting to processing and distribution. Educating and training locals in apiculture can boost employment rates and contribute to economic development in honey-producing regions.
- ✓ **Diversified Product Streams:**
- ✓ Beekeeping provides a range of marketable products beyond just honey, including beeswax, propolis, royal jelly, and bee venom.
- ✓ **Sustainable Practices:**
- ✓ Beekeeping can contribute to biodiversity and ecosystem health by ensuring pollination of crops and supporting natural habitats.
- ✓ **Local Market Opportunities:**
- ✓ Beekeepers can supply local markets with honey and other bee products, as well as contribute to the hospitality sector.
- ✓ **Corporate Social Investment:**
- ✓ Investing in beekeeping can be seen as a way for corporations to contribute to community development and economic growth while also generating a return.
- ✓ **Ecopreneurship:**
- ✓ Beekeeping offers opportunities for individuals to engage in sustainable business practices and contribute to environmental conservation.
- ✓ Challenges and Considerations:
- ✓ **Time and Patience:**
- ✓ Beekeeping requires a significant time investment and patience, as there are no guarantees on hive performance and colony establishment can take up to a year.

- ✓ **Learning and Management:**
 - ✓ Successful beekeeping requires knowledge and expertise in hive management, observing bee behavior, and addressing potential issues like stress, starvation, and pests.
- ✓ **Market Development:**
 - ✓ Building a strong brand and establishing a market for bee products requires marketing and sales strategies.
 - ✓ Specific Examples of Investment Opportunities:
 - ✓ **Project Beehive:**
 - This initiative in Kenya offers investors the opportunity to invest in beehives, supporting farmers and contributing to sustainable beekeeping practices.
- ✓ **Organic Honey Production:**
 - Investing in organic honey production and processing can capitalize on the growing demand for natural and healthy products.
- ✓ **Beekeeping Equipment Manufacturing:**
 - There is a demand for quality beekeeping equipment, providing opportunities for investors in this sector.
- ✓ **In Nandi County, Kenya:**
 - This region, with its diverse flora and potential for bee pollination, offers a promising location for apiculture investments. By focusing on sustainable practices and value-added products, beekeepers can contribute to local economic development and environmental conservation.

BENEFITS HONEY WAX

- ✓ Harvest beeswax and other products of the hive
- ✓ Though most people think first about honey from the hive, beeswax is valuable as well. Wax is produced by young worker bees when building honeycomb. Once rendered melted and filtered beeswax can be used to products for use at home use, to give as gifts, or to include on your sales table:
- ✓ Make lotions, lip balms, soap, and other skincare products.
- ✓ DIY beeswax products, including wax food wraps and wood furniture polish or cutting board conditioner.
- ✓ Craft beeswax candles from simple tapers and votives to **detailed molded candle designs** that look hand-carved.
- ✓ Because it contains few skin irritants and has a few antimicrobial compounds, beeswax is a favorite ingredient in beauty products, especially for people with sensitive skin.

BENEFITS BEE HONEY

- Bee honey offers numerous health benefits, including its role as a natural sweetener, an antioxidant, and an anti-inflammatory agent. It can also be used topically to promote wound healing and alleviate burns. Some research suggests honey may also help with coughs, colds, and even certain mental health conditions like anxiety.

BENEFITS BEE VENOM.

- Bee venom concluded that the venom may offer multiple therapeutic actions, including anti-inflammatory, anticancer, neuroprotective, pain-relieving, and antimicrobial effects.

POURLTRY FARMING.

- Investing in improved kienyeji hens in Kenya can be a profitable venture, especially when focused on semi-intensive farming practices. This involves balancing free-range access with controlled housing, feeding, and disease prevention for optimal productivity. Key aspects to consider include sourcing high-quality chicks, providing proper nutrition, and implementing effective management practices.

INVESTING IN TREES

- Investing in tree seedlings in Kenya can be a profitable venture, offering both financial returns and environmental benefits. Tree nurseries can provide a steady income stream, especially for small-scale farmers. Growing and selling seedlings can generate significant income, as evidenced by successful tree nursery owners who sell 200,000+ seedlings per season.
- Key aspects of investing in tree seedlings in Kenya:

Lucrative Livelihood:

- Tree nurseries offer a viable source of income, particularly for small-scale farmers.

High Demand:

The demand for tree seedlings, especially for reforestation and agroforestry projects, is high.

Lucrative Returns:

- Initial investments can yield significant returns, with some studies suggesting potential returns 40 times the initial investment after 10 years.

Environmental Benefits:

- Tree planting helps combat climate change, improve soil health, and provide other ecological benefits.

Government Initiatives:

- The Kenyan government has a long-term goal of increasing tree cover to 30%, which can drive further demand for tree seedlings.

Potential Challenges:

- Low-quality seedlings, poor handling during transplanting, and high seedling mortality can pose challenges to success.

Access to Resources:

- Access to land, water, and market information can be crucial for success.
- Examples of profitable tree seedling initiatives:

One Acre Fund:

- This organization supports farmers in growing and selling tree seedlings, helping them diversify their income and build climate resilience.

TIST Agroforestry:

- This initiative focuses on supporting farmers to plant trees that provide multiple benefits, including food, medicine, and livestock fodder.

University of Nairobi:

- The University of Nairobi's Department of Land Resources Management and Agricultural Technology (LARMAT) sells indigenous tree seedlings, providing a source of income and access to valuable tree species.
- KFS (Kenya Forest Service):
- The KFS promotes tree planting and offers guidance and resources for tree farmers.
- Here are five notable verses that relate to investing:

Bible Verses on Investment

1. Proverbs [13:11] – “Wealth gained hastily will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it.”
2. Proverbs [21:20] – “In the house of the wise are stores of choice food and oil, but a foolish man devours all he has.”
3. Ecclesiastes 11:2 – “Invest in seven ventures, yes, in eight; you do not know what disaster may come upon the land.”
4. Matthew [25:14]-30 – The Parable of the Talents.
5. 1 Timothy [6:17]-19 – “Command those who are rich in this world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way, they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.”
6. Key Aspects of Ellen G. White's Economic Teachings:

Ellen G. White, a key figure in Seventh-day Adventism, emphasized economic empowerment through practical stewardship and self-reliance. Her teachings advocate for wise resource management, honest labor, and a focus on serving others over personal indulgence.

Stewardship:

She believed that individuals are stewards of God's resources and should use them wisely, prioritizing the needs of others and the advancement of God's work.

Practical Labor:

White stressed the importance of honest work and encouraged individuals to find employment in various industries, emphasizing the value of practical skills.

Self-Reliance:

She advocated for self-sufficiency, encouraging people to develop skills and find opportunities to provide for themselves and their families.

Avoiding Extravagance:

White cautioned against excessive spending on personal pleasures and worldly possessions, suggesting that resources should be used to help others and advance God's Kingdom.

Fair Wages:

She believed in fair compensation for all workers and cautioned against exploiting others.

Education and Training:

White emphasized the importance of education and training, especially for women, to enable them to become more effective and contribute to society.

Ministry and Service:

She highlighted the importance of using one's talents and resources to serve others, both within the church and in the wider community.

Examples of Ellen G. White's Views:

- ✓ "Every worker in our institutions should receive fair compensation."
- ✓ There should be no extravagance in building fine homes, in buying costly furniture, in indulging in worldly dress, or in providing luxurious food; but in everything let us think of the souls for whom Christ has died."
- ✓ God calls for earnest women workers, workers who are prudent, warmhearted, tender, and true to principle."
- ✓ Intelligent Christian Men and women may use their talents to the very highest account."
- ✓ In essence, Ellen G. White's teachings on economic empowerment emphasize responsible stewardship, the dignity of labor, and the importance of using resources to serve God and help others, rather than indulging in personal desires or seeking worldly wealth.
- ✓ Empowering Families for Self-Reliance, attention should be given to the establishment of various industries so that poor families can find employment. EGW *Adventist Stewardship*
- ✓ "Men and Women are needed who are not self-important, but gentle in manners and lowly of heart, who will work with the meekness of Christ. *Adventist Women's Ministries*.
- ✓ All who work for God should have the Martha and the Mary attributes blended—a willingness to minister and a sincere love of the truth. *Daughters of God*
- ✓ Men and women of God, persons of discernment and wisdom, should be appointed to look after the poor and needy, the household of faith first. Those who have talents and capabilities must use these gifts to bless their fellow men, laboring to place them upon a footing where they can help themselves.

Chapter 4

BIBLE STUDY

REVIVING THE SABBATH WORSHIP.

DAY ONE

INTRODUCTION

DEFINITION

- What does the Hebrew word Shabahat mean?
- The word Shabbat comes from the Hebrew verb "shavat", which literally means "to cease". Shabbat implies that we need to stop working, stop trying, stop doing... For me, even this is work, a different kind of work. I literally need to work to rest, but really, it's more of a "work" of faith. Sabbath, (from shavat, "cease," or "desist"), day of holiness and rest observed by the Israelites from sunset on Friday to nightfall of the following day. The time division follows the biblical story of creation: "And there was evening and there was morning, one day" (Genesis 1:5).
- The gracious Creator, after the six days of Creation, rested on the seventh day and instituted the Sabbath for all people as a memorial of Creation. The fourth commandment of God's unchangeable law requires the observance of this seventh-day Sabbath as the day of rest, worship, and ministry in harmony with the teaching and practice of Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a day of delightful communion with God and one another. It is a symbol of our redemption in Christ, a sign of our sanctification, a token of our allegiance, and a foretaste of our eternal future in God's kingdom. The Sabbath is God's perpetual sign of His eternal covenant between Him and His people. Joyful observance of this holy time from evening to evening, sunset to sunset, is a celebration of God's creative and redemptive acts. (Gen. 2:1-3; Exod. 20:8-11; 31:13-17; Lev. 23:32; Deut. 5:12-15; Isa. 56:5, 6; 58:13, 14; Ezek. 20:12, 20; Matt. 12:1-12; Mark 1:32; Luke 4:16; Heb. 4:1-11.)

What is the Sabbath FOR

- ✓ The Sabbath is a day of rest, reflection, enjoyment and worship for God's people. It dates back to the seventh day of the creation week, when God stopped His work and took time to rest and savor it.
- ✓ In six days He created the world we live in (Genesis 1:1-26). From the blue sky to the fluffy white clouds to the food we eat...He created this world with each of us in mind.
- ✓ It was on the sixth day of creation that God formed man and woman in His own image.
- ✓ "Then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature" (Genesis 2:7, ESV).
- ✓ Then God looked around at all He had made and saw that it was "very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day" (Genesis 1:31, ESV).
- ✓ He had made everything necessary for humans to live and thrive here on this earth. But He wasn't quite finished with the whole creation process.
- ✓ On the seventh day God created the Sabbath. His last act of creation was to sanctify this day and make it holy. Then He rested.

- ✓ “Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation” (Genesis 2:1-3, ESV)

Why did God rest on the Sabbath?

- ✓ While the Bible tells us God “rested” on the Sabbath day, it doesn’t say that He rested because He was tired. (God does not “faint or grow weary”, as Isaiah 40:28, ESV tells us.) He rested to look over what He created and enjoy it.
- ✓ Even in our human lives, it’s not uncommon to stop and take a day off after a large project or a great accomplishment. Yes, we do get tired, unlike God. But after finishing something meaningful and beautiful, we don’t stop afterward just to rest. We stop to reflect upon and enjoy what was just accomplished!
- ✓ On the Sabbath day, we rest to celebrate God’s accomplishment of creating the world, and creating humanity to live in it and take care of it. We pause to take notice, learn more, and express gratitude to our Creator.
- ✓ When God rested on the seventh day, He set for us an example. He gave the weekly Sabbath as a day of rest and worship for all of mankind. The Sabbath is a memorial, a day when we remember God’s creative power.
- ✓ He alone is worthy of our worship, as beautifully described by Ellen White, one of the founders of the Adventist Church:
- ✓ “Because He had rested upon the Sabbath, ‘God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it,’”—set it apart to a holy use. He gave it to Adam as a day of rest. It was a memorial of the work of creation, and thus a sign of God’s power and His love.”
- ✓ God Wants Us to Rest as Part of the Remembrance
- ✓ Similar to memorial type holidays, the Sabbath is a day we can rest in remembrance of God. Just like we get a day off from work on memorial type holidays to remember a person or commemorate an event, the Sabbath is a day we can rest and remember. It’s a day to pause from our work, reflect, and rejuvenate.
- ✓ When we rest we put aside the cares of the world and it allows us to focus on our relationship with Him. Just like any meaningful relationship, it’s important to spend time together, talk together, and get to know one another.
- ✓ Sabbath rest gives us the perfect opportunity to connect with God.
- ✓ Trusting God with our time also demonstrates our total dependence on God to provide for our needs.
- ✓ “And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19, ESV).
- ✓ “Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you” (1 Peter 5:6, 7, ESV).
- ✓ Keeping the Sabbath allows us to rest our physical bodies. God didn’t need to rest, but He knows human beings do. It’s important for our mental and physical health to take time to rest and refresh. Studies have shown that people who take time to rest from their labors are healthier and more productive.
- ✓ “Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work. It is a Sabbath to the Lord in all your dwelling places” (Leviticus 23:3, ESV).
- ✓ “He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul” (Psalm 23:2,3a, ESV).

- ✓ Want to know more ways that God gives us rest, freedom, hope, and healing? Check out our online Bible studies.
- ✓ The Sabbath is part of the 10 Commandments.
- ✓ God gave Moses the Ten Commandments after the Exodus when the Israelites were freed from the bondage of slavery in Egypt. They fled into the wilderness for 40 years. During that time, God wrote the Ten Commandments on tablets of stone with His finger.
- ✓ The fourth commandment reminded the people to keep the Sabbath day holy. You can read all of the commandments in Exodus 20 and in Deuteronomy 5.
- ✓ God didn't give us these commandments because He wanted us to follow a bunch of hard rules. He gave us the Ten Commandments for our own good, that we may live peacefully. He wants us to live practical and enjoyable lives, maintaining uplifting relationships with one another and with Him.
- ✓ The Sabbath was made for mankind for our own good. God wants you to experience thankfulness and joy on the Sabbath day! Observing the Sabbath can be something we look forward to each week.
- ✓ When Jesus lived here on earth He kept the seventh day Sabbath. However, just a few hundred years after His death and resurrection, early Christians began keeping Sunday as their day of worship just as Daniel foretold.
- ✓ The change of the Sabbath as the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday happened in the year 321 A.D. The Roman Emperor Constantine issued a decree that all Christians were to begin observing Sunday as a day of rest.
- ✓ In the verse above, Daniel was saying there would be a kingdom who would try to change God's law. But God's law is eternal. And the Sabbath was made for all mankind for all eternity.
- ✓ “And he said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.” Mark 2:27 ESV
- ✓ Anyone can keep Sabbath by refraining from work and focusing on God. That also makes it a fitting time to go to church. We find in the Bible that Jesus typically went to the synagogue on Sabbath.
- ✓ “And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read” (Luke 4:16, ESV).
- ✓ “And on the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished...” (Mark 6:2, ESV).
- ✓ The Sabbath is the seventh day of the week, according to the Bible. We can follow Jesus' example by refraining from our regular daily work to focus on Him and His creation.
- ✓ The name of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church was chosen because of their belief in keeping the seventh day, as well as their belief in the literal second coming of Christ.
- ✓ As Sabbath keepers today, we can make the most of this the sacred day of rest each week with our family, friends, and other believers by:
- ✓ Worshiping in church rejuvenating our souls through quiet reflection.
- ✓ Finding refreshment through time spent in nature.
- ✓ Deepening our relationship with Christ through Bible study. Strengthening our relationships through time spent with family and friends
- ✓ Resting our weary bodies

- ✓ The Sabbath is cherished by Adventist Christians around the world. Adventists believe the Sabbath is a blessing for every created person, and it reminds us that we each have a powerful Creator and a loving Savior.
- ✓ The fourth commandment of God's unchangeable law requires the observance of this seventh-day Sabbath as the day of rest, worship, and ministry in harmony with the teaching and practice of Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a day of delightful communion with God and one another.
- ✓ God the Creator, after the six days of Creation, rested on the seventh day and instituted the Sabbath for all people as a memorial of Creation. The fourth commandment of God's unchangeable law requires the observance of this seventh-day Sabbath as the day of rest, worship, and ministry in harmony with the teaching and practice of Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a day of delightful communion with God and to one another. It is a symbol of our redemption in Christ, a sign of our sanctification, a token of our allegiance, and a foretaste of our eternal future in God's kingdom. The Sabbath is God's perpetual sign of His eternal covenant between Him and His people. Joyful observance of this holy time from evening to evening, sunset to sunset, is a celebration of God's creative and redemptive acts. (Gen. 2:1-3; Exod. 20:8-11; 31:13-17; Lev. 23:32; Deut. 5:12-15; Isa. 56:5, 6; 58:13, 14; Ezek. 20:12, 20; Matt. 12:1-12; Mark 1:32; Luke 4:16; Heb. 4:1-11.

DAY TWO

SABBATH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

According to the Book of Exodus, the Sabbath is a day of rest on the seventh day, commanded by God to be kept as a holy day of rest, as God rested from creation. Sabbath (Shabbat) observance is commanded in the Ten Commandments: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy". Exodus 20:8-11.

In the Bible, keeping the Sabbath involves resting from labor on the seventh day of the week, a day God blessed and made holy, to remember God's creation and rest. This practice serves as a reminder of God's rest after creating the world and as a time for spiritual renewal and fellowship.

Jesus taught that the Sabbath day was made for our benefit (see Mark 2:27). (Gen. 2:1-2). The purpose of the Sabbath is to give us a certain day of the week on which to direct our thoughts and actions toward God. It is not a day merely to rest from work.

How do we keep the Sabbath biblically?

The Bible tells us exactly how to keep the Sabbath: Friday sundown to Saturday sundown, you rest from work. Do your devotions, prayers, intercession, study and worship if you want. There are many things you can do besides work! That is what the Sabbath is; REST FROM WORK. It's right there in the bible.

The Bible requires that we observe the Sabbath day with gathered worship, but that is not all we should do. Prayer, solitude, journaling, reading and reflection are all crucial ways that we replenish our inward resting in Christ and his work alone for our salvation. Hebrews 4:1-10.

SABBATH REST IS A GIFT FROM GOD

Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. Exodus 20:8-11. Mark 2:27-28.Exodus 31:13-15

- ✓ You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD.
- ✓ (Isaiah 56:1-58:13-14) this passage promises blessings for those who honor the Sabbath. It states, "If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the Lord's holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words, then you will find your joy in the Lord". Essentially, it encourages the people to prioritize God's holy day and find joy in serving Him.
- ✓ Jeremiah is instructed to go to the gates of Jerusalem: and speak to the people.
- ✓ God's command is to observe the Sabbath day: and not carry burdens or do any work on that day.
- ✓ The Sabbath should be kept holy: as commanded to their forefathers.
- ✓ Obedience to this command will lead to blessings, including the entry of kings and princes into the city with the people of Judah and Jerusalem, and the city remaining inhabited forever.
- ✓ Failure to obey will result in the city being burned: with an unquenchable. Jeremiah 17:20-24.

24 HOURS SUNSET TO SUNSET.

- Sabbath, a weekly day of rest, is described in the Bible as being observed "from evening to evening". This means it begins at sunset on Friday and continues until sunset on Saturday. Leviticus 23:32:

DAY THREE

PREPARATION DAY

- In the Bible, "Preparation Day" (Greek: paraskeuē) refers to the day before the Sabbath, primarily Friday, when Jews prepared for the Sabbath by completing necessary tasks. This included activities like cooking, cleaning, and other chores that could not be done on the Sabbath itself. The term is also used in the Gospels to describe the day Jesus was crucified, as it was the day before the Sabbath.
- Bible Verses about Preparation Day
- Exodus 16:23. Then he said to them, "This is what the LORD has said: "Tomorrow is a Sabbath rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. ..."
- Exodus 20:8-11. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ..."
- Luke 23:54-56. ...
- Isaiah 58:13-14. ...
- Matthew 27:62. ...
- Mark 15:42. ...
- Genesis 1:31. ...

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not. On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily. "Exodus 16:4-5.

What is the day of preparation in John 19:31?

- In John, moreover, this Passover fell on a Saturday—thereby coinciding with the weekly Sabbath. "That Sabbath day was a high day" (John 19:31), in which the two

festivals were celebrated on the same day, and Friday (Nisan 14) was the Day of Preparation for them both.

Why is preparation important in the Bible?

- Here are the benefits of preparation in the Bible: Success and Abundance: Preparation leads to wise decisions and avoids pitfalls (Proverbs 21:5). Spiritual Growth: Being prepared allows you to embrace God's grace and live according to His will (Luke 1:17).
- Ellen White viewed preparation day, typically Friday, as a crucial time for setting aside all secular activities and preparing for the Sabbath. She emphasized that it was a time to complete work, arrange clothing, put away secular papers, and ensure all necessary tasks were finished before the Sabbath began. She also stressed the importance of resolving any differences with others, confessing faults, and seeking forgiveness, all to ensure a peaceful and reverent Sabbath. 6T355.3
- Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Exodus 20:8.
- At the very beginning of the fourth commandment the Lord said, "Remember." He knew that amid the multitude of cares and perplexities man would be tempted to excuse himself from meeting the full requirement of the law, or would forget its sacred importance. Therefore, He said: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."
- All through the week we are to have the Sabbath in mind and be making preparation to keep it according to the commandment.
- When the Sabbath is thus remembered, the temporal will not be allowed to encroach upon the spiritual. No duty pertaining to the six working days will be left for the Sabbath. During the week our energies will not be so exhausted in temporal labor that on the day when the Lord rested and was refreshed we shall be too weary to engage in His service....
- On Friday let the preparation for the Sabbath be completed. See that all the clothing is in readiness and that all the cooking is done. The Sabbath is not to be given to the repairing of garments, to the cooking of food, to pleasure seeking, or to any other worldly employment. Before the setting of the sun let all secular work be laid aside and all secular papers be put out of sight. Parents, explain your work and its purpose to your children, and let them share in your preparation to keep the Sabbath according to the commandment.6T 356.1
- There is another work that should receive attention on the preparation day. On this day all differences between brethren, whether in the family or in the church, should be put away. Let all bitterness and wrath and malice be expelled from the soul. In a humble spirit, "confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another."
- Before the setting of the sun let the members of the family assemble to read God's Word, to sing and pray.
- For every man, moreover, to eat and drink and enjoy the fruit of all his labor is a gift of God." "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for your selves. Mathew 11:28 -29.
- We should jealously guard the edges of the Sabbath. Remember that every moment is consecrated, holy time. The faith I lived by 34..Our Father Cares - Page 73.

DAY FOUR

- ✓ The Observance of the Sabbath According to Ellen White
- ✓ Great blessings are enfolded in the observance of the Sabbath, and God desires that the Sabbath day shall be to us a day of joy. There was joy at the institution of the Sabbath. God looked with satisfaction upon the work of His hands. All things that He had made He pronounced "very good." Genesis 1:31. Heaven and earth were filled with rejoicing.

“The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” Job 38:7. Though sin has entered the world to mar His perfect work, God still gives to us the Sabbath as a witness that One omnipotent, infinite in goodness and mercy, created all things. Our heavenly Father desires through the observance of the Sabbath to preserve among men a knowledge of Himself. He desires that the Sabbath shall direct our minds to Him as the true and living God, and that through knowing Him we may have life and peace. 6 Testimonies 349.1.

- ✓ When the Lord delivered His people Israel from Egypt and committed to them His law, He taught them that by the observance of the Sabbath they were to be distinguished from idolaters. It was this that made the distinction between those who acknowledge the sovereignty of God and those who refuse to accept Him as their Creator and King. “It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever,” the Lord said. “Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant.” Exodus 31:17, 16. 6 Tesimonies 349.2
- ✓ As the Sabbath was the sign that distinguished Israel when they came out of Egypt to enter the earthly Canaan, so it is the sign that now distinguishes God's people as they come out from the world to enter the heavenly rest. The Sabbath is a sign of the relationship existing between God and His people, a sign that they honor His law. It distinguishes between His loyal subjects and transgressors. 6T 349.3
- ✓ From the pillar of cloud Christ declared concerning the Sabbath: “Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.” Exodus 31:13. The Sabbath given to the world as the sign of God as the Creator is also the sign of Him as the Sanctifier. The power that created all things is the power that re-creates the soul in His own likeness. To those who keep holy the Sabbath day it is the sign of sanctification. True sanctification is harmony with God, oneness with Him in character. It is received through obedience to those principles that are the transcript of His character. And the Sabbath is the sign of obedience. He who from the heart obeys the fourth commandment will obey the whole law. He is sanctified through obedience. 6T 350.1
- ✓ To us as to Israel the Sabbath is given “for a perpetual covenant.” To those who reverence His holy day the Sabbath is a sign that God recognizes them as His chosen people. It is a pledge that He will fulfill to them His covenant. Every soul who accepts the sign of God's government places himself under the divine, everlasting covenant. He fastens himself to the golden chain of obedience, every link of which is a promise. 6T 350.2
- ✓ The fourth commandment alone of all the ten contains the seal of the great Lawgiver, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. Those who obey this commandment take upon themselves His name, and all the blessings it involves are theirs. ‘The Lord spoke unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel saying unto them, 6T 350.3
- ✓ “The Lord bless thee, and keep thee:
The Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:
The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.
And they shall put My Name upon the children of Israel;
And I will bless them.” Numbers 6:22-27. 6T 351.1
- ✓ Through Moses was given also the promise: “The Lord shall establish thee a holy people unto Himself, as He hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in His ways. And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord.... And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou

hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them." Deuteronomy 28:9-13. 6T 351.2

- ✓ Closing our Businesses on the Sabbath.
- ✓ Avoiding Business:
- ✓ Ellen White discouraged any form of business activity on the Sabbath, including buying, selling, and engaging in trades. She believed that such activities distracted from the Sabbath's purpose of rest and spiritual reflection.
- ✓ Preparation on Friday:
- ✓ She emphasized the importance of preparing for the Sabbath on Friday, completing all necessary tasks and making sure that the home is ready for rest on Saturday. This included cooking, cleaning, and preparing for meals.
- ✓ No "Work" on the Sabbath:
- ✓ Ellen White considered various actions as work on the Sabbath, including cooking, shaving, and even simple chores like washing clothes. She believed that these activities should be postponed until the Sabbath was over.
- ✓ Emphasis on Spiritual Matters:
- ✓ Ellen White encouraged Sabbath observance as a time to focus on spiritual matters, such as Bible study, prayer, and fellowship with fellow believers. She saw the Sabbath as a time to draw closer to God and receive His blessings.
- ✓ Specific Counsel:
- ✓ While some of Ellen White's detailed Sabbath counsel, such as the prohibition of cooking on the Sabbath, may be interpreted differently today, her core principles of Sabbath rest and spiritual devotion remain relevant.
- ✓ The question has been asked: "Should our restaurants be opened on the Sabbath?" My answer is: No, no! The observance of the Sabbath is our witness to God, the mark, or sign, between Him and us that we are His people. Never is this mark to be obliterated. 7T 121.1

Were the workers in our restaurants to provide meals on the Sabbath the same as they do through the week for the mass of people who would come, where would be their day of rest? What opportunity would they have to recruit their physical and spiritual strength? 7T 121.2

- ✓ Not long since, special light was given me on this subject. I was shown that efforts would be made to break down our standard of Sabbath observance that men would plead for the opening of our restaurants on the Sabbath; but that this must never be done. 7T 121.3
- ✓ A scene passed before me. I was in our restaurant in San Francisco. It was Friday. Several of the workers were busily engaged in putting up packages of such foods as could be easily carried by the people to their homes, and a number were waiting to receive these packages. I asked the meaning of this, and the workers told me that some among their patrons were troubled because, on account of the closing of the restaurant, they could not on the Sabbath obtain food of the same kind as that which they used during the week. Realizing the value of the wholesome foods obtained at the restaurant, they protested against being denied them on the seventh day and pleaded with those in charge of the restaurant to keep it open every day in the week, pointing out what they would suffer if this were not done. "What you see today," said the workers, "is our answer to this demand for the health foods upon the Sabbath. These people take on Friday food that lasts over the Sabbath, and in this way we avoid condemnation for refusing to open the restaurant on the Sabbath." 7T 121.4
- ✓ The line of demarcation between our people and the world must ever be kept unmistakably plain. Our platform is the law of God, in which we are enjoined to observe

the Sabbath day; for, as is distinctly stated in the thirty-first chapter of Exodus, the observance of the Sabbath is a sign between God and His people. "Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep," He declares; "for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you.... It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed." 7T 122.1

- ✓ We are to heed a "Thus saith the Lord," even though by our obedience we cause great inconvenience to those who have no respect for the Sabbath. On one hand we have man's supposed necessities; on the other, God's commands. Which have the greatest weight with us? 7T 122.2
- ✓ In our sanitariums the family of patients, with the physicians, nurses, and helpers, must be fed upon the Sabbath, as any other family, with as little labor as possible. But our restaurants should not be opened on the Sabbath. Let the workers be assured that they will have this day for the worship of God. The closed doors on the Sabbath stamp the restaurant as a memorial for God, a memorial which declares that the seventh day is the Sabbath and that on it no unnecessary work is to be done. 7T 122.3
- ✓ I have been instructed that one of the principal reasons why hygienic restaurants and treatment rooms should be established in the centers of large cities is that by this means the attention of leading men will be called to the third angel's message. Noticing that these restaurants are conducted in a way altogether different from the way in which ordinary restaurants are conducted, men of intelligence will begin to inquire into the reasons for the difference in business methods, and will investigate the principles that lead us to serve superior food. Thus they will be led to a knowledge of the message for this time. 7T 122.4
- ✓ When thinking men find that our restaurants are closed on the Sabbath, they will make inquiries in regard to the principles that lead us to close our doors on Saturday. In answering their questions, we shall have opportunity to acquaint them with the reasons for our faith. We can give them copies of our periodicals and tracts, so that they may be able to understand the difference between "him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not." 7T 123.1
- ✓ Not all our people are as particular as they should be in regard to Sabbath observance. May God help them to reform. It becomes the head of every family to plant his feet firmly on the platform of obedience.

DAY FIVE

- ✓ What are the acceptable activities on the Sabbath? And Things that should be done on Sabbath
- ✓ According to Jesus, the Sabbath is a day to rest and worship, with a focus on spiritual enrichment and good deeds. This includes attending church, studying scripture, praying, and performing acts of kindness. Rest from temporal labor, dedicating time to God, and performing good deeds are key aspects of Sabbath observance.
- ✓ What does Jesus want us to do on the Sabbath?
- ✓ Jesus taught that the Sabbath day was made for our benefit (see Mark 2:27). The purpose of the Sabbath is to give us a certain day of the week on which to direct our thoughts and actions toward God. It is not a day merely to rest from work. It is a sacred day to be spent in worship and reverence.
- ✓ The possibility for Sabbath activities are expansive!

- ✓ Take walks, visit the sick, sing, nap, talk, eat good food, do bible study with a neighbor, Humanitarian but in all of these things remember why you are resting. God created you to rest in his presence.
- ✓ In several instances, Jesus affirmed that doing good on the Sabbath is lawful. He uses examples like rescuing a sheep from a pit or healing a man with a withered hand to demonstrate that the Sabbath is meant to be a day of doing good and saving lives.

But, according to Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath (Matt. 11:8), it is also right to heal and do other good things on the Sabbath. Christians who honor the principle of Sabbath, no matter the exact day, follow the teaching of Jesus by doing good as part of their Sabbath observance. Ellen White, in her writings, emphasized that doing good on the Sabbath is not only permitted but also encouraged. She argued that the Sabbath is a time for rest, worship, and holy deeds, including acts of mercy and compassion. Jesus himself exemplified this by healing the sick and doing good on the Sabbath, demonstrating that it is lawful to do well on God's holy day. The necessities of life must be attended to, the sick must be cared for, the wants of the needy must be supplied. He will not be held guiltless who neglects to relieve suffering on the Sabbath. God's holy rest day was made for man, and acts of mercy are in perfect harmony with its intent. Matthew 12:9-14 describes Jesus healing a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath, a Sabbath day healing recounted in Luke 6:6-11 and Mark 3:1-6. Luke 13:10-17

Disciplining those who violate the Sabbath

In Nehemiah 13:15-21, Nehemiah rebukes the merchants for desecrating the Sabbath by bringing in goods and selling them on that day. He ordered the city gates closed on the Sabbath and warned the merchants not to stay overnight near the wall, ultimately preventing them from trading on the holy day. Nehemiah 13:20-25. Now the merchants and sellers of all kinds of wares lodged outside Jerusalem once or twice. Then I warned them, and said to them, "Why do you spend the night around the wall? If you do so again, I will lay hands on you!" From that time on they came no more on the Sabbath. Numbers 15:32-36 describes the stoning of a man who was found gathering wood on the Sabbath day. This passage recalls the Fourth Commandment which requires rest on the Sabbath from routine work (Exod 20:8-11) including the gathering of manna (16:22, 26-27), cooking (vv. 23-25, 29-30), and the kindling of fire (35:2-3).

In the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Sabbath observance is a core belief, and the Church Manual outlines the steps for church discipline when a member violates the Sabbath. The process typically begins with a private conversation and, if necessary, progresses to a church counsel meeting, where the member's actions are discussed and the church decides on appropriate actions, which can range from prayer to exclusion from church membership.

Reasons for Discipline SDA Church Manual 20th Edition Pg 67-68.

Chapter 5

SABBATH SCHOOL LESSONS

Nine Ideas about Organization

Idea No. 1

- ✓ Write a Statement of Mission for Your Sabbath School.
- ✓ A statement of mission is a declaration that states what your Sabbath School is all about and what you wish to accomplish. It sets a general direction for your Sabbath School. When formulating a statement of mission, use these questions:
 - ✓ Who are we?
 - ✓ Why are we here?
 - ✓ What do we hope to accomplish?
 - ✓ What do we expect will happen as a result?

Idea No. 2

Organize a Viable Planning Committee.

Find some people in your church that you know are creative and have good ideas. Ask them to form an *ad hoc* adult Sabbath School planning committee to come up with some creative ideas. Have them meet with the adult Sabbath School superintendent and brainstorm.

Idea No. 3

Plan Your Programs for a Year in Advance.

To many adult Sabbath School run on a week-to-week basis with no particular rhyme or reason. All too often the person in charge contacts someone on a Friday night to “read a mission story” in Sabbath School the next day. Organize a major planning session at the beginning of the year to lay out programs for the year.

Idea No. 4

- ✓ Use Some Forms to Plan Your Work.
 - Annual Activities Planner
 - Quarterly Program Planner
 - Weekly Program Planning Guide

Idea No. 5

Organize the Work of the Superintendents.

- ✓ Each superintendent can be assigned a certain number of programs during the year and each one plans all the activities for those programs.
- ✓ Each superintendent takes charge of a different aspect of the program and does this one thing for the year.

Sabbath School Superintendents:

Superintendent 1 –Study and teachers

Superintendent 2 –Fellowship

Superintendent 3 –Community outreach

Superintendent 4 –World mission emphasis

Idea No. 6

Develop a Theme for the Programs.

One way to keep the interest level high is to develop programs around themes. You can narrow themes down to one a month, or even choose a different theme for each Sabbath of the month.

January: Step Ahead Month

Every member should learn to do one new thing.

February: Youth Month

Give the youth a prominent place in Sabbath School.

March: Evangelism Month

Train how members can do personal evangelism.

April: Know Your Church

Emphasis on our Adventist heritage

May: Christian Family Month

Emphasis on family

June: Missions Month

Special focus on Adventist world missions.

July: Recreation Month

Sabbath School picnic, social activity in every class.

August: Get Acquainted Month

Every Sabbath School member find five new friends.

September: Homecoming Month

Members contact non-attendees. Major Rally Day.

October: Teacher Recognition Month

Teacher recognition service, teacher banquet.

November: Stewardship Month

Thanks offerings. Emphasis on investment.

December: Good Will Month

Christmas program, decision day for new year.

More Ideas for Themes:

Adventist Heros

- ✓ Unique Religious Experiences
- ✓ Adventist Heritage
- ✓ How I Found Adventism
- ✓ Songs of Adventism
- ✓ Where Does Sabbath School Money Go?

Idea No. 7

Choose Alternative Curriculums for Special Needs And Groups

- How to set up and use your own personal soul-winning network.
- Parenting classes for young adults.
- How to be single and survive.
- Pastor's class.
- Discipling classes:
- How to discover and use your spiritual gifts.
- How to give Bible studies.

Idea No. 8

Set Goals for Attendance and Sabbath School Ministries

- Set goals for attendance and the number of ministries your Sabbath School carries out.
- Use percentages instead of numbers.
- Develop progress charts to show how you are doing

Idea No. 9

Write Out "10 Commandments" for Your Sabbath School

1. Maintain a roll and attendance record.
2. Check the roll every week.
3. Follow up on absentees
4. Strictly observe the starting and stopping times.
5. Make the time in Sabbath School count. Be enthusiastic.
6. Provide fellowship opportunities.
7. Make Sabbath School enjoyable for visitors.
8. Use imagination in room setting and finding space.
9. Do all the good you can.
10. Make Sabbath School part of going to church.

Eight Ideas for Increasing Attendance

Idea No. 1

Develop a Program of Fellowship

- Fellowship and participation are the keys to a successful Sabbath School.
- Use the "Total Hour Learning" system in your Sabbath School.

Idea No. 2

Use a Survey to Assess Needs

- Organize some people in your Sabbath School to contact non-attendees and get their input.

Idea No. 3

Advertise Your Sabbath School

- Use your church newsletter, bulletin, and mailing list to advertise your Sabbath School programs.
- Advertise to the community. Your church communication secretary can help design an advertising program.
- Advertise to the general public. Sabbath School is Christian education, so you can advertise it just that way. Advertise in the local newspaper.
- Obtain a list of people in your church's sphere of influence that have children of the ages that fit your children's departments. Send them something that describes your program and invite the kids. Mention that you have classes for the adults too.

Idea No. 4

Organize Your Sabbath School Classes around the OIKOS Principle

Oikos is the Greek word that literally means “house” or “household.” A household in this sense means the network of people with whom you have contact. That includes friends, neighbors, associates at work, clients that come through your door for service, etc.

- Pray regularly and specifically for the people on your Oikos.

Develop a discipleship plan

- Attentive listening
- relating to needs
- Identifying receptive periods
- Appropriate timing
- understanding language

Idea No. 5

Build a Viable Prospect List

- A viable prospect list means that you will have an up-to-date list of names to whom you can send newsletters, invitations to church events, people you can visit, and to whom you can give Bible studies.
- Develop a workable plan to keep yourself informed about SS/Church prospects within your own church.
- Develop a plan for systematically communicating with people on your prospect list who have attended church functions such as health classes or Revelation seminars.

Idea No. 6

Use Incentives and Interesting Arrangements to Build Attendance

- Incentives and unique plans seem to have the aura of “promotion” in some circles, and some Sabbath Schools tend to avoid them. These Sabbath Schools are also very often empty. Here are some unique plans that can help increase your Sabbath School attendance:
 - special days attendance plan
 - the “fill a pew” plan
 - the “three find one” plan

Idea No. 7

Once a year hold a special class on how to do evangelism through the Sabbath School.

Idea No. 8

Use Special Days to Increase Attendance.

- Pathfinder Day.
- Departmental Promotion Days.
- Rally Day, etc.

Chapter 6

HEALTH MINISTRIES

DAY 1

God gave us health message for a reason

Let's examine four reasons why the Lord in His mercy gave His people the health message to share with the world, and why it remains relevant for us today.

Healthier Lives

God gave us the health message because He wants us to live healthier, happier lives while living on this earth. This principle is illustrated in Jesus' healing of the paralytic in **Matthew 9:1, 2:** "So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed."¹ Notice that "they" brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. The paralytic did not come by himself. Don't miss this crucial point: The New Testament catalogues about 30 separate cases of healing; in more than half of them the sick did not come to Jesus by themselves. Somebody was concerned enough to bring their loved one to Jesus.

Jesus is the true source of all healing. In the use of rational scientific methods we create an environment in which healing can take place, but the One who heals the body is the One who created it in the first place.

Verse 2 continues: "When Jesus saw their faith . . ." Faith is not just something cognitively believed; rather, it's something that's seen when it's translated into action. It's real; it's tangible. The full sentence in Scripture reads, "When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, 'Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.'" The man is healed, and Jesus declares: "Be of good cheer." Not only was the paralytic physically healed, his sins were forgiven, and Jesus encouraged him to be of good cheer. In other words, Christ was saying to the man, "My desire for you is to live a happy, abundant life. Your sickness has robbed you of enjoying life in all its fullness. I have given you back not only your health but life in all its richness." That's the same thing Jesus wants not only for us but for the people we come in contact with in our daily lives.

One of the primary reasons God has given His people the health message is **to enable them to enjoy life to the fullest.** It's not some legalistic requirement to cause people to feel oppressed by all the things they *have* to do or *cannot* do. The health message is given by a loving God so that you and I can live an abundant life and share that life with those we meet.

Link to the Mind

God gave His message of health so we can know Him in all His fullness. There's an intimate link between our physical, mental, and spiritual health. Jesus often spoke of physical healing and forgiveness in almost the same breath, such as in the story of the paralytic.

Many times in the New Testament Jesus told those whom He healed to go and sin no more. On other occasions Jesus first forgave, then healed. This tells us that healing from Jesus is restoration—physical, mental, and emotional. Sin has left its deadly toll on all aspects of our lives. The gospel is to restore men and women wholly to the image of God. There is a strong mental and spiritual component to the health message. Our physical bodies, our mental states, and our spiritual lives are all intimately connected to one another.

The brain, for instance, is nourished by the quality of the blood transported to it through veins and arteries. The Holy Spirit speaks to us through our brain. When we're continually inactive, the blood that passes to the brain isn't able to fully oxygenate it. We can also impair our health

in other ways that negatively affect our brain, such as eating a high-fat diet, which damages the quality of the blood that nourishes the brain. When we live such unhealthful lifestyles, it becomes much harder for the Holy Spirit to “reach” us. Our minds are unable to understand as clearly the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

Ellen White makes this point in an 1881 *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* article: “Let none who profess godliness regard with indifference the health of the body, and flatter themselves that intemperance is no sin, and will not affect their spirituality. A close sympathy exists between the physical and the moral nature. . . . Wrong habits of eating and drinking lead to errors in thought and action. Indulgence of appetite strengthens the animal propensities, giving them the ascendancy over the mental and spiritual powers.”²

God has given us the health message so that among other things **we can have clear minds, enabling us to draw closer to Him in prayer and Bible study.** He wants to protect us from consuming a diet that will destroy the health of our bodies and deaden our spiritual impulses. God doesn’t want us to be so stressed from overwork and the lack of physical exercise that we have foggy brains and sluggish thoughts. He desires that we have clear minds so that we can hear His voice speaking to us through His Holy Spirit and His Word—then our hearts will be in tune with His heart, and our minds with His mind. In short, **He wants us to know Him more fully.**

Preparing for the Coming of Jesus

The gift of good health helps to enable us to be ready for the coming of Jesus. Here’s where the Seventh-day Adventist health message is unique. Although many of our specific health practices are taught by others, Adventists endorse healthful living for a higher purpose—**to help prepare people for Jesus’ second coming.**

Health is not an add-on to Jesus’ teachings, but an integral part of His last-day message. The apostle Paul affirms this in **1 Thessalonians 5:23:** “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Adventists believe that human beings are an integrated unit: physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual. What affects our physical health affects our state of mind. What affects our state of mind affects our physical health. What affects our mental and physical health affects our emotional health. What affects our physical, mental, and emotional health affects our spiritual health.

Healthful lifestyle practices open the mind so that the Holy Spirit can take full control and prepare the whole person for the coming of Jesus. In this way the Holy Spirit can empower us to surrender our lives fully to Jesus. It’s impossible to obtain salvation by diet or exercise; salvation comes only through the grace of Jesus Christ. When His grace permeates our lives, however, we consecrate every aspect of our beings to Him in preparation for His soon return. The health message is part of His last-day message of giving “glory to Him” in the final generation.

More Effective Witnessing

The health message enables us to be the most powerful witnesses possible for Jesus as we approach His return. Many people will never be reached through a direct proclamation of God’s Word. But when we approach them with kindness, love, and understanding, when we sympathize with them over their struggles with health issues, doors are opened to the medical missionary that are not opened to one who proclaims the gospel only.

Again in Matthew 9:32 we read: “As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed. **“Mark** tells us, “He came to Bethsaida; and they brought a blind man to Him.” Again and again medical missionaries brought people to Jesus.

Ellen White wrote, “Nothing will open doors for the truth like evangelistic medical missionary work.”

The Ultimate Goal

What then is the ultimate purpose of medical missionary work? It’s certainly to give us longer, healthier lives and a more intimate relationship with Jesus. But it also provides us with opportunities to share Jesus with others. As we encourage smoking cessation, share the benefits of a healthful diet, we are to watch for moments in which we can tell of the Creator’s love and His longing to develop a close relationship with His children and always reflect His grace.

There’s a difference between medical missionary work and providing only health education. We are medical missionaries with a task to accomplish for Jesus. We are much more interested in the souls of men and women than we are in merely helping them to live a few years longer on this earth. We want them to live eternally with Jesus.

If love for others leads us to work as a health professional-physician, nurse, dentist, health educator—or to share the benefits of healthful living in more simple ways such as with cooking schools and smoking-cessation programs, that same love should compel us to introduce others to Jesus, the true health restorer, our friend and Savior.

God has opened up opportunities for medical missionary work so we can be channels of blessing to the world. This type of ministry is a vehicle to touch people with the gospel. It provides opportunities to kindly and compassionately introduce people to Jesus. May we recognize the sacredness of our calling and be faithful to the task.

DAY 2

Living a better life

Some Seventh-day Adventists ask: Does our diet have anything to do with our salvation? Yes and no. Or, perhaps, no and yes.

No first, because the greatest heresy about our salvation is giving or claiming human credit for it. Neither food, nor lifestyle, nor intellect, nor sweat till exhaustion helps anyone develop a pathway to salvation, or advance on some existing redemption road: salvation results from a positive response to the gift of Jesus and His redeeming grace. But even the capacity to believe we’re saved is from outside of ourselves, a gift of God that precludes any creaturely boast (Eph. 2:8).

Yet Scripture’s own explanation of our absolute dependence on God for salvation explicitly connects human behavior with salvation: God’s salvation re-creates us in Christ Jesus for good works He programmed beforehand, “that we should walk in them” (verse 10, KJV).

We are not saved by fork and knife; neither are we perfected by our pedometers. But better behavior is part of God’s salvation program. Good works are part of God’s expression, through saved persons, of His miracle of salvation. So while we are not saved by our diet, once saved, our eating, drinking, and living all reflect on God’s name and character (1 Cor. 10:31). He works in us the willing and doing of His good pleasure (Phil. 2:13); our choices for our bodies are enlightened and will not dishonor or disrespect Him, our Savior and Master (1 Cor. 6:19, 20).

Redeemed individuals ask naturally, “How can I live a better life?” They want to know what they can do and say now that will further God’s kingdom; that will show their participation in the good works He ordained for them long ago. “What should I read or watch now? How should I engage my time now?” They feel the need to live more in harmony with how Jesus would live. Individuals who have accepted Jesus are new persons; old habits change (2 Cor. 5:17), including nutrition habits.

Good Works Eating Habits

Better nutrition is more than just eating wisely to lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels. The principal reason for Adventism’s unique health message is not reducing health bills and living longer. It’s to be more effective and productive in honoring God: the efficiency of our work for God depends largely upon our physical condition.¹ Eating right—quality, quantity, time(s)—often makes the difference between living to life’s full potential or not.

An unhealthy lifestyle can prevent us from enjoying the most meaningful relationships, especially our partnership with Christ. Sleep deprivation, unmanaged stress, and the use of unhealthy substances can affect our memory and depreciate the quality of both our service to God and our relationships with others. Inactivity encourages the advancement of disease processes and alters the quality and length of our ministry.

In the same way, unhealthy food choices may impact our physical and mental health and limit our useful service to God. Moreover, our bodies are God’s temple/sanctuary (1 Cor. 3:16). They deserve the best care.

So as we prepare for the coming of Jesus, diet does matter. Whatever promotes physical health (healthy diet, regular exercise, adequate sleep, etc.) promotes the development of a strong mind and a well-balanced character. Therefore, we are encouraged to preserve all our powers in a condition that will enable us to give the best possible service, the most glory, to God (1 Cor. 6:19, 20).

And who doesn’t want the best for their bodies? If certain foods are known to undermine good health and increase the risk of disease and death, it would only make good sense to avoid them, thus possibly lengthening and increasing the quality of our productive lives.

For example, scientific data shows an increased risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, some cancers, obesity, and diabetes from the consumption of meat. Hundreds of research papers show the value of a regular use of fruit and vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts, and seeds, to significantly lower the incidence of those chronic diseases. No wonder that among those who are waiting for Jesus’ return meat eating will cease to form a part of the diet.²

Furthermore, God has assigned us the stewardship of earth’s resources (Gen. 1:26-30; 2:8-15). Science recognizes that a diet with a rich focus on plant products is more sustainable of life on earth with a low environmental impact. A plant-based diet consumes less of the earth’s resources and produces fewer greenhouse gas emissions. The health of the planet, as well as our own health, depends upon the food choices we make.

A diet based mainly upon whole plant foods with the use of some minimally processed and fortified foods has strong scientific support. Heavily processed and refined foods, especially those containing large amounts of fat, salt, and/or sugar are not the healthiest choices.

God chose a plant-based diet for our parents in the Garden of Eden. Ellen White saw that discarding the use of all animal products, dairy included, is in our future, because of increasing

disease in animals. Where fortified plant foods are yet unavailable, or poverty limits food choices, discretion should dictate the pace of dietary reform.⁴

Whatever dietary preferences we choose (omnivore, pescatarian, dairy-free, gluten-free, vegetarian, etc.), diet should not be used as a standard for measuring others. Paul admonishes clearly enough: “Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat,” and vice versa. For “the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking” (Rom. 14:3, 13, 17).

For the early church, eating provided a venue for fellowship (Acts 2:42; Rev. 3:20) that did much to promote unity. While God’s kingdom is not defined by eating patterns, we should make every effort to do what leads to peace and mutual edification, and not allow food choices to create chaos in the church (Rom. 14:19, 20), at potlucks or elsewhere.

The Stewardship of Body Temple

As creatures of God, we do not own our physical bodies. We are basically stewards of our bodies. As a result, we cannot use our bodies for activities that do not please the Lord. In relation to this point, the apostle Paul pleaded with the Christians at Rome: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1).

To the Corinthian church, Paul provided the following counsel:"18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.19 what? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

(1 Corinthians 6:18-20; see also 1 Corinthians 3:16-17) Beloved, besides the strong warning that the Lord has given us to refrain from fornication and other immoral activities that destroy the body, the Lord also expects that we take good care of our bodies to remain in good health. The Lord expects us to utilize the health principles He has revealed unto us so we can stay strong to make good gains in the ongoing battle for the salvation of souls (see 3 John 1:2). As God's people, we must endeavor not to forget that our bodies are the temple of God and in the soon coming future the Lord will require an account from us in relation to how we have utilized this temple.

One Last Word

A good diet is not the only ingredient of a healthy lifestyle. Along with good food choices, one must get regular and adequate sleep, engage in regular physical activity, and drink plenty of clean water (colas won't work), properly manage stress, have meaningful relationships with God, friends, and family, and much more. When our total lifestyle honors God, it backs up every argument in favor of His kingdom and soon return.

Day 3

Healthful living

Genesis tells us the story of the 6-day creation week, followed by the first Sabbath. God's relational love is introduced right away as He creates a perfect world, then personally forms the first two human beings to populate this planet. Adventists believe that focusing on health should be an intentional and voluntary decision for each individual, but informed by the God who created us. He is the Author of all true science.

The acronym CELEBRATIONS describes 12 principles of healthful living that, when consistently practiced, result in a healthful lifestyle and an appreciation of living well.

1. **Choices** largely determine our destiny. Be intentional about choosing what is best for your health and avoiding harmful practices.
2. **Exercise** regularly to maintain God's gift of optimal health and peace of mind.
3. **Liquids**—choose pure water to stay hydrated for optimal health. Avoid harmful or intoxicating drinks.
4. **Environment** is God's gift to humanity. Care for it and keep it safe and clean—for today and for future generations.
5. **Belief** in a caring God can reduce stress and anxiety. Trusting in Him imparts strength to the whole being.
6. **Rest** refreshes a tired body and a weary soul. It helps maintain optimal physical and mental health and performance.
7. **Air** that is fresh and unpolluted is essential for health.
8. **Temperance**—avoid what is harmful, and enjoy in moderation what is good.
9. **Integrity**—be honest, transparent, and accountable for your actions, fostering trust in all relationships.
10. **Optimism**—choose to look on the bright side, even when things don't turn out the way you wish. We can always ask God to help us see His blessings, even in unfavorable circumstances.
11. **Nutrition** supports vibrant, productive living. For optimal health, make plant foods the foundation of each meal, avoiding refined and highly-processed products.
12. **Social support**—build relationships with friends and family, thus strengthening stress-coping skills and nurturing resilience.

The apostle Paul wrote, "*Don't you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought at a price. So glorify God with your body*" (*1 Corinthians 6:19-20*)

As Seventh-day Adventists seek to honor God with our whole being—body, mind, emotions, spiritual life, and social interactions—we CELEBRATE His wonderful gift of health.

Chapter 7

PROPHECY LESSONS

I. The Vision of the Four Beasts (Daniel 7:1-28)

A. Introduction

Daniel 7 is the center chapter of the book of Daniel. It is also a transitional chapter between the Aramaic and Hebrew portions of the book. “Chapter 7 seems the climactic piece of the Aramaic ‘stories’ section and yet it is not a story but a vision. So language-wise chapter 7 belongs to 2-6 and yet category-wise, as a vision, it introduces a series of visions (8-12) and itself stands as the first vision in chronological sequence (7:1; 8:1; 9:1-2; 10:1). Chapter 7 then has an overlapping function in the book’s structure. It both climax and preface.”¹⁵⁷

Earlier dreams recorded in Daniel (Dan 2, 4) were to Nebuchadnezzar which Daniel interpreted for him. But in chapter 7, God spoke to Daniel himself through a dream vision, which was interpreted by an angel. Related to that, Daniel wrote chapters 1-6 in third person but shifted to first person in chapter 7.

A chiastic pattern for chapters 2-7 exists and may be summarized as follows: Vision of the four world empires (2)

Deliverance of Daniel’s friends from the fiery furnace (3) Judgment of Nebuchadnezzar – resulting in repentance (4) Judgment of Belshazzar – resulting in death (5)

Deliverance of Daniel from the lions’ den (6) Vision of the four world empires (7)

Thus, the theme of chapter 7 is very similar to the theme of chapter 2. Daniel 2 contained Nebuchadnezzar’s vision of a great statue, each part representing four Gentile nations whose rise and fall would characterize the times of the Gentiles. That same theme that is repeated in Daniel 7 but with a slightly different emphasis. In Daniel 2, those four Gentile nations were represented by four precious metals because that is the way they were seen from a human perspective: majestic, with the grandeur and glory of worldly kingdoms. But in Daniel 7, those same four Gentile nations are represented not by precious metals as seen from the human perspective, but vicious beasts as seen from God’s perspective. That is the way God sees earthly kingdoms who rule with no consideration of Him: self-seeking, cruel, violent, destructive, arrogant, and animal-like in their power. God does not see things the same way man sees them.

“Men’s achievements apart from and in opposition to Him are not spectacular from heaven’s perspective. In fact, they are far worse than the activities of wild, carnivorous animals, for no animal ever sins...There is no hell for the animal kingdom. But men are wicked and cruel in the sight of God and are under His judgment.”¹⁵⁸

Also, while both chapters 2 and 7 describe a ten-fold division in the fourth kingdom (10 toes in chapter 2, 10 horns in chapter 7), chapter 7 introduces the presence of an 11th horn. “And the focus of the seventh chapter is not on the ten but rather upon this eleventh horn.”¹⁵⁹

Not only is Daniel 7 one of the most important chapters in this book, it is one of the most important chapters in the whole Old Testament because it provides the most comprehensive and

detailed prophecy of future events and the future kingdom of Christ. With its focus on Jesus Christ as ruler of His future kingdom, this chapter functions as a centerpiece of Old Testament revelation concerning the Messiah's final kingdom. It is a tremendous chapter that shows how, after the final judgment in which God will destroy the last defiant Gentile nation and ruler, God will give his everlasting kingdom to Christ and to His people.

B. Expositional Notes

1. The Content of Daniel's Dream (vs. 1-14)

Daniel 7:1 ~ In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel saw a dream and visions in his mind as he lay on his bed; then he wrote the dream down and related the following summary of it.

- That this dream occurred in the “first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon” indicates that this is a flashback to a time prior to the events of chapter 6 with Daniel in the lion’s den under Darius the Mede.
- It is also a flashback to a time prior to the events of Daniel 5 when Belshazzar’s kingdom was destroyed and his life was taken from him.
- This dream occurred between chapters 4 and 5, in the “first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon,” which was 553 BC, 14 years before the feast of Belshazzar which came in his final year (539 BC).
- Daniel would have been about 68 years old when he received this vision.

Daniel 7:2 ~ Daniel said, “I was looking in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea.

- The “four winds of heaven stirring up the great sea” likely refers to the Mediterranean Sea (cf. Num 34:6-7; Josh 1:4; 9:1; Ezek 47:10-15).
- Daniel would have known about this sea, having been raised in his early years in Israel.
- He saw the sea being stirred up, violently heaving up and down, being tossed to and fro by the winds.
- In the Bible, the sea is often a symbol for chaos, disorder, and hostility toward God.
- It represents the sea of sinful humanity that is in a constant state of unrest, chaos, and turmoil due to their own wickedness and rebellion.
- It serves as a picture of the world in its godlessness and instability since the “four great beasts” arise from this sea in Daniel’s vision (cf. Is 8:6-8; 17:12-13; Rev 13:1; 17:1, 15).
- The fact that these beasts came up out of the sea is the first clue that these beasts are evil and likely stand for hostility against God.
- He saw humanity shaken and agitated by all of the conflict in the world, the consequences of their sinfulness.

Daniel 7:3 ~ And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another.

- Emerging from the sea, Daniel saw 4 beasts which he attempted to describe with terms he was familiar with.

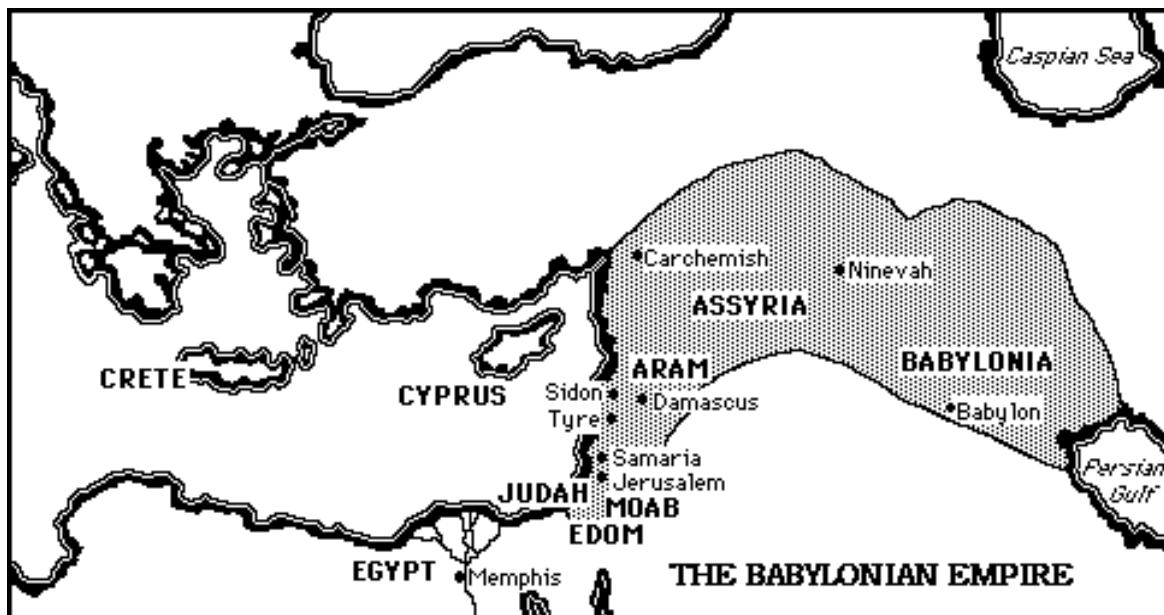
- Some have called this the “Jungle Book” chapter but perhaps a better name is the “Jurassic Park” chapter.
- Later in the chapter, these 4 beasts are identified as “four kings who will arise from the earth” (vs. 17).
- It is clear that these 4 beasts represent the same 4 empires which the statue in Daniel 2 represented.
- The main point of Daniel 2 was that, starting with Babylon, there would be four major Gentile powers that would rule over the world and Israel.
- Rather than being represented by shining, brilliant, precious metals, they are represented here as ugly monstrosities which were violent and destructive.



Daniel 7:4 ~ The first was like a lion and had the wings of an eagle. I kept looking until its wings were plucked, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man; a human mind also was given to it.

First Beast

- This beast represents Babylon, symbolizing the same kingdom as the golden head in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream.
- It looked like a lion (probably referring to its strength) but had wings like an eagle (probably referring to its swiftness).
- The lion is the king of the land animals and the eagle is the king of the birds.
- Both the lion and the eagle were symbols of Babylon with the Old Testament prophets comparing Babylon to a lion (cf. Jer 4:6-7; 49:19; 50:17) and an eagle (cf. Jer 4:13; 48:40; 49:22; Ezek 17:3; Hab 1:8).
- The national symbol of ancient Babylon was a winged lion, such that winged lions lined the major street in Babylon and guarded the gates to the royal palaces.
- That “its wings were plucked” refers either to Nebuchadnezzar’s insanity in chapter 4 or his empire’s deterioration after his death.
- That it stood “on two feet like a man” and had a “human mind” likely refers to the fact that his rule was a human dominion.



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Daniel 7:5 ~ And behold, another beast, a second one, resembling a bear. And it was raised up on one side, and three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth; and thus they said to it, 'Arise, devour much meat!'

Second Beast

- This beast represents Medo-Persia, the nation that conquered Babylon, symbolizing the same kingdom as the silver chest/arms in Nebuchadnezzar's dream.
- It looked like a bear, a powerful, frightening animal with considerable strength (cf. Is 13:15-18).

These maps taken from “Daniel” by J. Dwight Pentecost in The Bible Knowledge Commentary 1985: 1352.

- That it was “raised up on one side” shows it was a lopsided bear, indicating that, of the two countries, Persia was by far the greater and more powerful one.
- That it had “three ribs in its mouth” likely refers to the nations Medo-Persia conquered and vanquished (Babylon, Egypt, Lydia).
- The bear was told to “devour much meat” referring to the fact that it would conquer other kingdoms and extend its territory into a vast empire.

- This shows that the kingdoms of men operate only by divine appointment, not by their own authority.



Daniel 7:6 ~ After this I kept looking, and behold, another one, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird; the beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.

Third Beast

- This beast represents Greece, the nation that conquered Medo-Persia, symbolizing the same kingdom as the bronze abdomen/thighs in Nebuchadnezzar's dream.
- It looked like a leopard with four wings, referring to the swiftness and agility of the Grecian empire under the command of Alexander the Great.
- Greece conquered Medo-Persia with great speed between 334 BC and 330 BC.
- The "four heads" represent four generals who divided the kingdom after Alexander's death in 323 BC at age 33 (cf. Dan 8:8, 21-22).
- Those four generals were: 1) Ptolemy (ruled over Egypt, Palestine, Arabia); 2) Seleucus (controlled Syria, Babylonia); 3) Cassander (ruled over Macedonia and Greece); 4) Lysimachus (ruled over Thrace and Asia Minor).



NOTE: the first 3 beasts mentioned in Daniel's vision are also mentioned in the description of the beast which John saw rising out of the sea in his vision on the island of Patmos (cf. Rev 13:1-2).

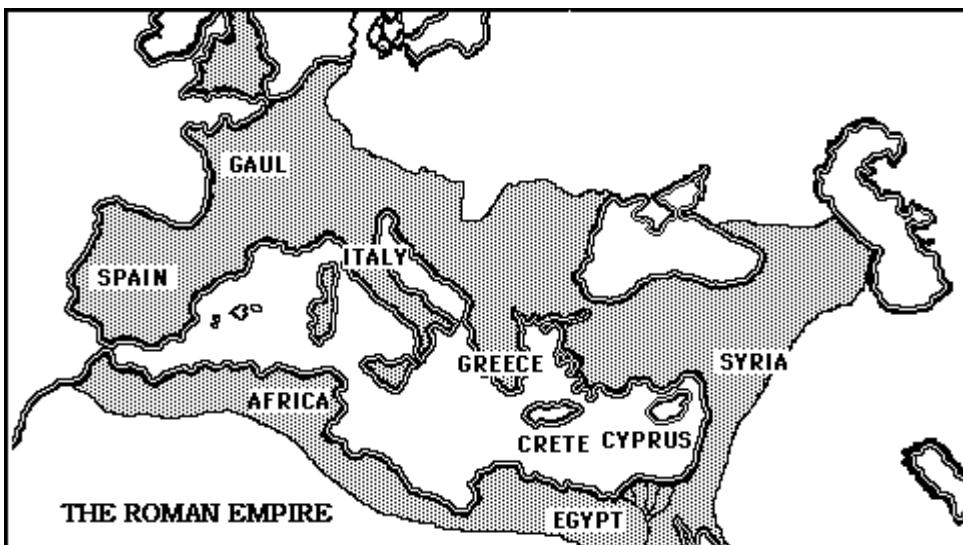
Daniel 7:7-8 ~ After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.

While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth uttering great boasts.

Fourth Beast

- ✓ The fourth beast is not likened to any known animal since it was/is not like any animal.
- ✓ “The lion, bear, and leopard certainly were not like any real-life versions of those animals, but overall they did exhibit many of their characteristics. Yet the fourth beast did not look like any animal Daniel had ever seen.”¹⁶¹
- ✓ This beast represents the Roman Empire, which conquered Greece in 146 BC, symbolizing the same kingdom as the iron legs/feet in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream.
- ✓ The “iron teeth” of this beast convey the strength and power of the Roman Empire.
- ✓ The focus in Daniel 7 is on this fourth beast.
- ✓ This fourth beast was more “dreadful and terrifying” than the three preceding beasts, which were all ferocious and destructive.
- ✓ It “devoured and crushed and trampled down” the previous empires in that it assimilated them into itself.

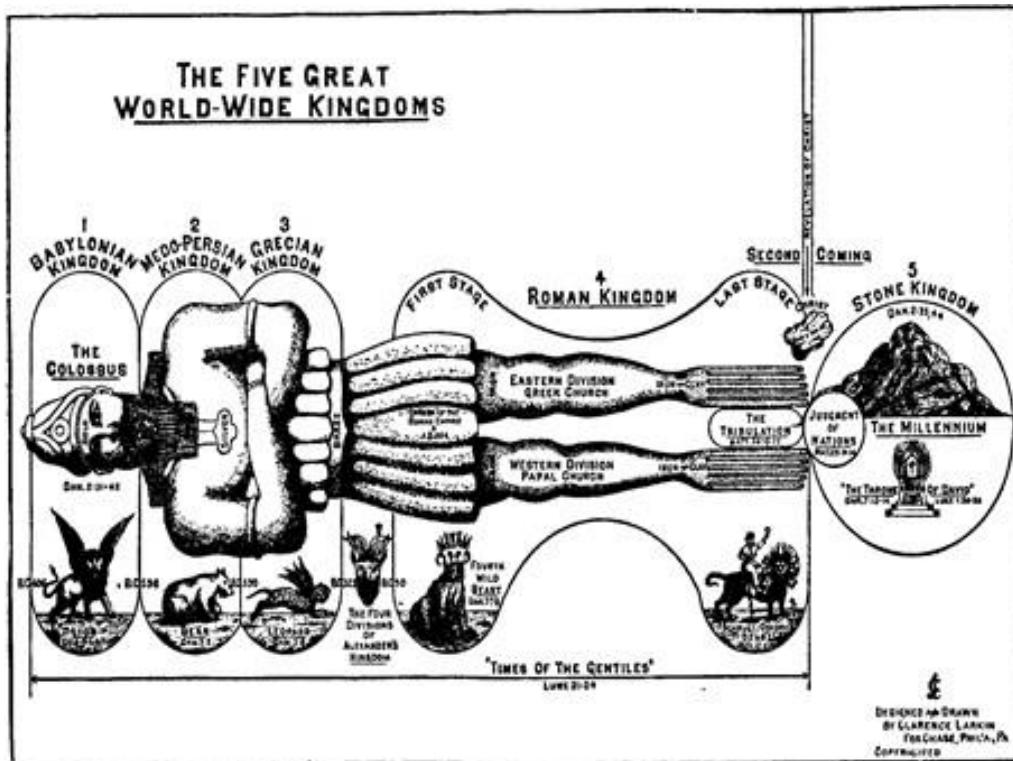
This speaks to the power and total domination of the Roman Empire which ruled for nearly 600 years in the West (until 476 AD) and about 1500 years in the East (until 1453 AD).



- This future Roman phase is further explained in vs. 8.
- ✓ Daniel As noted in chapter 2, this fourth kingdom has two phases: 1) Phase 1 which occurred from 146 BC to 476 BC; 2) Phase 2 which is still future.
- ✓ As noted in chapter 2, the legs of the statue referred to the past Roman empire (phase 1) and the feet/toes referred to a future revived Roman Empire (phase 2).
- ✓ A large gap of time (unknown to Daniel) exists between the two phases of the Roman empire.
- ✓ That Daniel didn't foresee the period in between the two phases of the Roman empire is not surprising since the Old Testament never anticipated the mystery form of the kingdom, the church age.
- ✓ Not until the time of Christ is it understood that there would be two coming of the Messiah.
- ✓ The existence of two phases of the fourth kingdom is corroborated by the unique feature of this fourth beast, namely that "it had ten horns" (vs. 7).
- ✓ "Frequently in the Old Testament the term *horn* is used to describe power, and thus, appropriately, powerful rulers (1 Kings 22:11; Ps. 75:10; 132:17; Zech. 1:18)." ¹⁶²
- ✓ Daniel 7:24 indicates that these 10 horns represent 10 kings who rule over 10 kingdoms.
- ✓ Since the past phase of the Roman empire (Rome 1) had no 10-nation confederacy, this must be a future phase.
- ✓ Daniel saw this Gentile world power finalizing itself in a 10-king confederacy.
- ✓ Thus, it must refer to an actual, historical, political, earthly kingdom ruled over by 10 kings in a confederacy.
- ✓ It requires a future 10-nation confederacy as a key to the political and international situation in the days just preceding the second coming of Christ and His kingdom.
- ✓ saw in his vision the rise of a single horn, an 11th horn, a little horn, that uprooted 3 horns.
- ✓ If the 10 horns are kings, it makes sense that the little horn is also a king.
- ✓ This king is a king distinct from the 10 kings but closely affiliated with them.
- ✓ The fact that it is "little" indicates that initially it is not well known but will later become dominant.
- ✓ It will pluck up by the roots "three of the first horns."
- ✓ Verse 24 indicates this means that it will "subdue three kings," pointing to the fact that three future, yet-unidentified nations, will come under the power and authority of this little horn.

- ✓ “The uprooting of three horns symbolizes that three kings or kingdoms (nations) will be conquered by the new ruler...By force this king (the little horn) will subjugate other kings (and their kingdoms) who resist his quest to rule over them (or to incorporate them into his empire).”¹⁶³
- ✓ That this “little horn” has “eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth uttering great boasts” indicates that this is not just a kingdom, but an actual human, a real man.
- ✓ “Eyes” refer to insight, knowledge, with the mental ability to solve great problems (Zech 3:9; Rev 4:6; 5:6). He will be extremely intelligent and crafty.
- ✓ He is proud and arrogant and blasphemous such that his speech is filled with great boasts, likely able to attract and deceive great numbers of people.
- ✓ This description fits the traits of the Antichrist, a future ruler who will bring 3 of the 10 nations under his authority in his initial rise to power and who will eventually become ruler over the 4th empire.
- ✓ The book of Revelation corroborates this description of Antichrist.
- ✓ Rev 13:1-2 adds weight to what Daniel saw in that it describes the beast having 10 horns (representing the 10 nations he rules over) and 7 heads (possibly representing successive world empires (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and the final kingdom of Antichrist).
- ✓ John envisions a final world government headed up by a revived Roman empire under the domination of a single ruler, the Antichrist.
- ✓ Rev 13:5-6 supports the fact that he will possess a “mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies” and will be given great “authority.”
- ✓ Rev 13:7-8 indicates that he will be granted “authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation.”
- ✓ Thus, that kingdom, under the control of Antichrist, will trample and crush those who oppose it, giving way to a one-world government under a worldwide dictator.
- ✓ Rev 17:3, 7, 12 provide similar details.
- ✓ The 10 horns are sub-rulers under Antichrist who will be the leader of a revived Roman empire that will be the final earthly empire in place prior to Christ returning to establish his eternal kingdom.
- ✓ Thus, John affirms the very thing Daniel anticipates.

- ✓ Daniel's vision provides a great panorama of human history, all leading up to the time when Christ comes and establishes His eternal Kingdom.



Daniel 7:9-10 ~ I kept looking Until thrones were set up, And the Ancient of Days took His seat; His vesture was like white snow And the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was ablaze with flames, Its wheels were a burning fire. 10 A river of fire was flowing And coming out from before Him; Thousands upon thousands were attending Him, And myriads upon myriads were standing before Him; The court sat, And the books were opened.

- After describing the times of the Gentiles when the wicked nations of the earth oppress God's people, Daniel takes his readers into the courts of heaven itself and shows where the beasts will finally be tamed and destroyed.
- He flashes forward to the throne of God from which judgment will come on the fourth kingdom.
- The very structure of verses 9-14 proves that point:
- Vs. 9-10 describe the Ancient of Days seated on His throne as the sovereign judge of the universe.
- Vs. 11-12 describe the judgment of God upon the nations of the world.
- Vs. 13-14 describe the Son of Man being given an everlasting kingdom.
- The kingdoms of the world are squeezed between the Ancient of Days and the Son of Man indicating that their doom is certain and their destruction is coming.
- Starting in verse 9, there is an abrupt and startling transition from the scene by the sea to a courtroom where the Ancient of Days holds court.
- The blasphemy of the Antichrist in verse 8 is immediately contrasted with the sovereign Lord "shown sitting upon his throne, calmly preparing for the day of judgment"¹⁶⁴ in verses 9-10.
- The "Ancient of Days" (cf. vs. 13, 22) can only be the sovereign God, specifically the

Father, who exercises control over men and nations.

- The point is surely not that God is old in the sense of feebleness; rather, it conveys the sense that He is venerable, dignified, wise, and capable of good judgment.
- He is ancient in that He has always existed (cf. Ps 90:1-2; 93:2; 102:24-25; Jer 10:10).
- As the Ancient of Days, God has existed long before the rise of the nations and will exist long after their fall.
- If the One like the Son of Man (vs. 13-14) is Messiah, then the One who gives Messiah the kingdom is the Father. They are distinct. This provides an Old Testament glimpse into the plurality within the Godhead.
- Daniel describes His appearance as “white snow...pure wool,” speaking of His holiness, purity, and righteousness.
- His throne and its surroundings are described with fiery depictions.
- Usually in Scripture fire signals God’s presence in judgment and justice.
- Such a fiery description fits Ezekiel’s vision of the throne of God (Ezek 1:4, 13, 27).
- God is a consuming fire (Heb 12:29) and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb 10:31).
- “Thousands upon thousands were attending Him” (vs. 10), likely a reference to His servants, possibly the angels surrounding His throne ready to execute His will.
- And “myriads upon myriads were standing before Him” (vs. 10; cf. Rev 5:11-12).
- Their very presence around the throne of God adds to the atmosphere of majesty and authority for the judgment about to be meted out.
- The books in this courtroom were open (vs. 10) indicating that the same God who assigns power to kingdoms will also judge those kingdoms.
- Their deeds are recorded and they will be judged accordingly (cf. Ps 62:12; Prov 24:12; Rev 20:11-15).
- “In this context ‘the books’ specifically contain the account of the wicked deeds of the Antichrist and his evil empire, for when the books are opened, the beast is judged. When the records were consulted, it was found that the beast deserved judgment.”¹⁶⁵

Daniel 7:11-12 ~ Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking; I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire. 12 As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but an extension of life was granted to them for an appointed period of time.

- Verse 11 records the annihilation and destruction of the fourth kingdom, including the beast.
- There is coming a day when the fourth beast, the revived Roman empire, headed by Antichrist, will be relieved of its power, not by being conquered militarily, but by divine judgment.
- He will be utterly destroyed at Christ’s second coming (cf. Dan 2:34-35, 45; 9:27; Rev 11:15; 19:15, 19-20; 20:10).
- This event will terminate “the times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24, 27).
- “If it were not so sad, the scene would be humorous. This little horn with a big mouth is spewing out venom toward the Almighty when suddenly the first of God’s judgment falls, and the little horn is silenced forever.”¹⁶⁶
- Not only will Antichrist and His kingdom be destroyed, so also will the influence of all the Gentile nations (vs. 12).
- The Babylonian, Medo-Persian and Greek empires to some extent continued in their successors.

- The Gentile nations and kings changed but still continued more or less in the same pattern.
- For example, when Medo-Persia followed Babylon, the dominion of Babylon was taken away but in some sense the kingdom persisted in its successor, etc.
- But the end of the fourth beast will be dramatic, cataclysmic, and final such that the rulers and the people will be completely destroyed.
- When God pours out his judgment at the return of Christ, the last remnant of the Gentile kingdoms will be annihilated.
- “Nothing of it will be left to contaminate Christ’s millennial kingdom.”¹⁶⁷
- The fact that “an extension of life was granted to them for an appointed period of time” (vs. 12) means that, although the first three empires were conquered, they continued on because they were absorbed into the next empire.
- Such will not be the case for the fourth empire however.

Daniel 7:13-14 ~ I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. 14 And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.

- The identity of the “Son of Man” has resulted in a number of different views: 1) The Son of Man was Judas Maccabee (a view held by Porphyry who died in 304 AD); 2) He is the angel Michael since a similar term is used to refer to angels in Daniel (cf. Dan 8:15; 9:21; 10:18); 3) Many modern Jewish scholars claim he is a corporate symbol speaking of the saints of Israel, a personification of ideal Israel.
- But it is best to take the “Son of Man” as a clear reference to Christ, the Messiah.
- Arguments for this view include:
 - a. The Old Testament often speaks of an individual who will rule as king and head up all government for Israel and the nations (cf. Gen 49:10; 2 Sam 7:16; Ps 2:6-9; Is 2:2-4; 9:7; Zech 9:9-10; 14:9). Daniel’s statement is in harmony with this anticipation.
 - b. The fourth empire in vs. 7-8 is corporate but has an individual leader, the little horn, in its final expression. Similarly, the final kingdom of God can have a corporate group of saints and yet have one great leader, the Messiah.
 - c. Reference to coming on the clouds of heaven points to a heavenly Messiah since clouds are often associated with the Lord (cf. Ex 34:5; Num 10:34; 2 Sam 22:12; Job 22:14; Ps 68:34; 104:3; Matt 24:30; 26:64).
 - d. Jesus frequently used this term (more than 80 times) to refer to Himself (Matt 16:27; 19:28; 26:64; Mark 8:31; John 1:51). Christ identified Himself as the One whom Daniel saw in this vision. It is a title that speaks of His humanity, suffering, and work as the ideal Man.
- Thus, verses 13-14 emphasize the major thrust of this passage, namely the coronation of the Lord Jesus Christ as the eternal king and sovereign ruler of the world.
- It describes that crucial moment in human history when Christ is crowned king of Kings and Lord of lords.
- Daniel provides a glimpse into the future and describes a scene when Christ is crowned as the one True king, the apex of

history!

- Daniel, 550 years before Christ was born, described the time when Christ is crowned king of Kings, when the Son is presented a universal kingdom by the Father.
- In fact, Daniel looks as it were all the way past Christ's birth, death, resurrection, and ascension, past the church age, to when Christ returns again a second time to establish His kingdom.
- Daniel anticipates the moment when the Son of Man approaches the Ancient of Days in preparation for His coronation (vs. 13).
- This scene is also described in Revelation 5, when the title deed to the earth is given from the Father to the Son.
- Revelation 5:6-7 describes the moment when the Son takes the book out of the hand of the Ancient of Days.
- This is the very same scene that Daniel saw, that moment Christ is coronated as King and given dominion and a kingdom which will never be destroyed (Rev 5:13).
- In verse 14, Daniel described the glory of the coming kingdom of Jesus Christ and lists a number of characteristics of it.

a) An Authoritative Kingdom

- “Dominion” refers to ruling authority.
- When Christ takes His kingdom, He will have absolute authority and will preside as the supreme, absolute ruler on earth.
- When Christ reigns on the earth, it will not be a democracy but rather a total dictatorship by a loving, perfect, gracious, supreme, sovereign and good King.
- He will not be some weak, inept ruler clamoring to shore up His empire because it is crumbling.
- He will not be a king who tries some power-grab to stay in office.
- He will not resort to bribery or extortion or corruption or shady political practices to maintain his power.
- Rather, He will rule and reign because He is given dominion from the Ancient of Days Himself.
- His throne will be established with the very power and authority of heaven itself and no one will thwart it.
- There will be no coups, no usurpations of His power, no hostile takeovers, no revolution or rebellion, and no overthrow of His government.

b) A Glorious Kingdom

- “Glory” refers to the honor that accompanies the authority.
- His kingdom will be dignified, glorious, and one to be revered.
- In the kingdom, Christ will be honored by those over whom he rules.
- The redeemed of Christ will bow the knee in reverential awe and His kingdom will be filled with praise from the saints who willingly offer themselves in humble worship to the King of Kings.
- His kingdom will possess glory, an intrinsic glory related to the glory He alone possesses.
- And His kingdom will elicit ascribed glory in that it will cause all those who are in it to recognize and acclaim the glory Christ has.

c) A Universal Kingdom

- “all the peoples, nations, and men of every language” will serve Him.
- He will reign as king over Israel (cf. Ezek 37:16-17, 22).
- He will reign as king over the Gentiles (cf. Dan 2:35).
- He will reign as king over the entire earth (cf. Zech 14:9).

d) An Everlasting Kingdom

- His kingdom will be “an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed.”
- In contrast to the previous kingdoms which were temporary, Christ’s kingdom will last forever (cf. Dan 2:44; 4:34; 6:26).
- His kingdom will never be conquered by another kingdom.
- His reign will be established on earth for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1–6).
- After the Lord’s millennial reign, He will surrender the kingdom to God the Father, after which Christ will be appointed as Ruler over God’s eternal kingdom forever (1 Cor. 15:24–28).
- “By virtue of His authority as Creator of heaven and earth (John 1:3; Col. 1:16; Heb 1:2), our Lord Jesus Christ deserves to receive the kingdom from the Father. But in addition to this, He paid the full price of our redemption upon the cross, and, in the process, defeated the enemy, Satan (Heb 2:14). Thus, by double right, creation and redemption, Christ receives an eternal kingdom that no one else deserves to rule.”¹⁶⁸

2. The Interpretation of Daniel’s Dream (vs. 15-28)

The preceding discussion has already given some of the explanation of this vision, but additional details are given in these verses.

Daniel 7:15-18 ~ As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed within me, and the visions in my mind kept alarming me. 16 I approached one of those who were standing by and began asking him the exact meaning of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: 17 ‘These great beasts, which are four in number, are four kings who will arise from the earth. 18 But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.’

- Daniel was distressed by this vision and received help from “one who was standing by” (cf. vs. 10), probably an angel (Gabriel?), similar to one who also assisted him later (Dan 8:13-16; 9:21-27).
- Though he had demonstrated the ability to interpret Nebuchadnezzar’s dreams previously, he could not interpret this one or his next one (8:15).
- Verse 17 makes it clear that the great beasts represent a succession of kings, each one representing the prominent leaders of those empires: 1) Nebuchadnezzar (Babylon);
2) Cyrus (Medo-Persia); 3) Alexander the Great (Greece); 4) Antichrist (Rome).
- Verse 18 indicates that the kingdom of Christ will involve a shared rule, one where Messiah and the “saints” rule together (see discussion below on vs. 27).

Daniel 7:19-20 ~ Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its claws of bronze, and which devoured, crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet, 20 and the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head and the other horn which came up, and before which three of them fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts and which was larger in appearance than its associates.

- It is the fourth beast about which Daniel wanted further information.
- While he seemed to have no difficulty in understanding the meaning of the first three beasts, it was the fourth beast that required explanation, particularly the “other horn which came up.”

Daniel 7:21-22 ~ I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them 22 until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom.

- A number of factors have already been learned about the Antichrist from verse 8:
 - He will rise to power after the 10 kings are in existence.
 - He will rule contemporaneously with those 10 kings, not successively.
 - He will subdue 3 of the 10 kings (cf. vs. 24).
 - He will be intelligent (cf. vs 8 ~ eyes like the eyes of a man).
 - He will be arrogant and boastful (cf. vs. 11) but with great oratorical abilities. He will gain the world’s approval through his silver tongue, arriving on the chaotic Tribulation scene with vision and answers and power to unite the world (cf. Rev 13:5).
- Added to these characteristics of Antichrist are a few more from verse 21-22:
- He will wage “war with the saints,” referring to his persecution of the saints in the Tribulation, especially Israel. These “saints” are not church-age saints since the existence of the church in the present age was a mystery, unrevealed in the Old Testament. Rather, these “saints” refer to the believing Jews present when Christ returns to earth. It is these “Tribulation saints” whom Antichrist will greatly persecute (cf. 7:25; 9:26-27; Matt 24:15-22; 13:7).
This “time of Jacob’s distress” (Jer 30:7) will be so devastating that two-thirds of the nation of Israel will die (Zech 13:9).
 - He will overcome the nation Israel and will bring them under his authority (cf. Rev 12:13-17).
 - He will exercise his authority over the Jewish people until he is judged by God when Christ returns and executes His judgment (cf. Rev 19:19-20).

Daniel 7:23-26 ~ Thus he said: ‘The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. 24 As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. 25 He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time. 26 But the court will sit for judgment, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever.’

- Further insights into the nature of the Antichrist and his kingdom are given here:
 - He will be a military genius, able to trample and crush all those who oppose him, creating one-world government with himself as dictator (vs. 23).
 - He will rise from a revived Roman empire after the group of 10 nations has developed (vs. 24), rising insignificantly at first, then eventually gaining control over that entire confederacy.
 - He will blaspheme the Lord with his profane and irreverent speech (vs. 25), claiming even to be God (cf. 2 Thess 2:4) and demanding the world worship him (Matt 24:15; Rev 13:11-17).
 - He will be a religious genius making “alterations in times and in law” (vs. 25). This could refer to his ability to change the entire landscape of worship and religious observances in society. In short, he will do everything he can to overturn everything that God has established, particularly the distinctive character of the worship of Israel. Antiochus Epiphanes attempted to discontinue the distinctive customs and holy festivals of the Jewish people.
 - He will succeed in gaining control of the world for a time, but his reign will be limited to 3½ years (vs. 25 ~ time, times, and half a time; cf. 9:27; 12:7; Rev 11:2-3; 12:6, 14). At the end of that period of time, he will be judged, his dominion will end, and his destruction will be final. He will be “annihilated” not in the sense that he will cease to exist but will be killed and cast alive into the lake of fire (cf. 2 Thess 2:8; Rev 19:20).

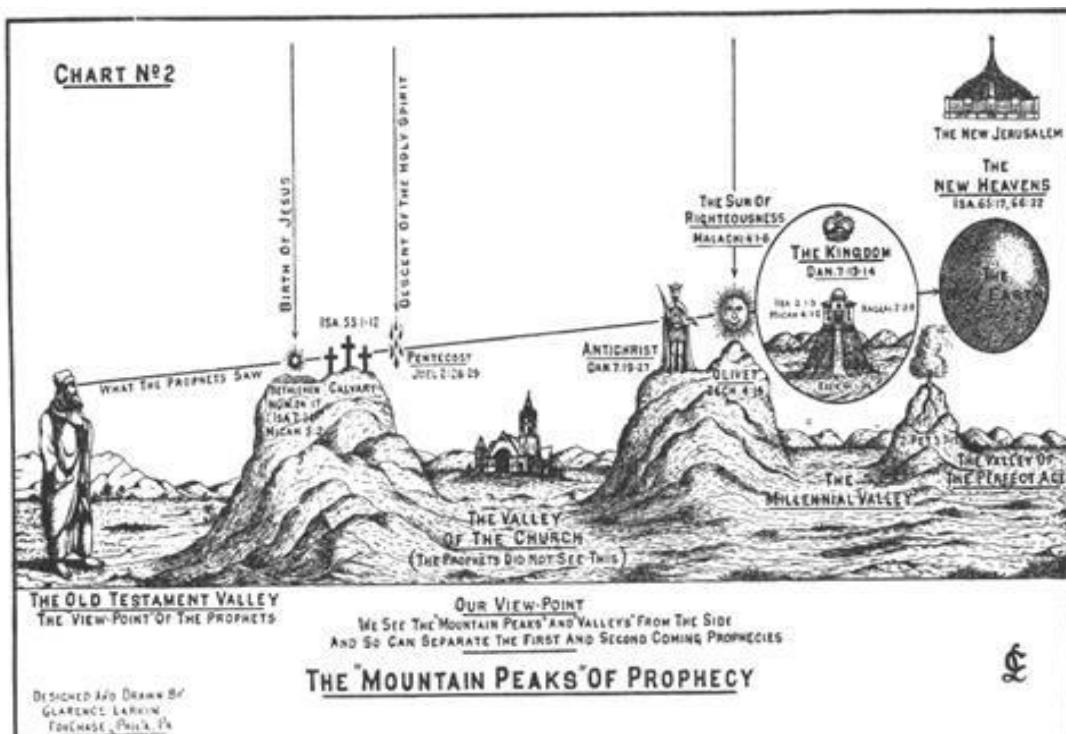
NOTE: While some have taken the “little horn” to refer solely to Antiochus Epiphanes (Goldingay, Lucas), most see Antiochus as a prefiguration of Antichrist (Walvoord, Wood, EBC, BKC).

Daniel 7:27 ~ Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.’

- Upon the destruction of Antichrist and his kingdom, Christ will establish His earthly kingdom, a worldwide kingdom which will be given to God’s saints.
- “As God prepared Israel for the brightness of David by the darkness of Saul, so also, on a vastly greater scale, the ultimate hour of darkness of our invisible enemy (John 12:31) will be overwhelmed by the ‘sun of righteousness’ which ‘will rise with healing in its wings’ (Mal 4:2).”¹⁶⁹
- Three times in this chapter it is stated that the kingdom of God will be given to the saints (vs. 18, 22, 27).
- These are not angels as some think (see “people” in vs. 27).
- These are God-fearing Jews who will have survived the Tribulation who will enjoy the kingdom in fulfillment of God’s promises to Israel in the Old Testament.
- They will also include God-fearing Jews from the Old Testament who have returned with Christ at his Second Coming.
- Additionally, all church-age saints will be there as well.
- Thus, all the saints of all time will possess the kingdom that will be headed by Christ and they will rule and reign with Him (cf. 2 Tim 2:12; Rev 3:21; 5:10; 20:4, 6; 22:5).
- This points to dispensational premillennialism (contra amillennialism which holds that the church is the present form of the kingdom) for a number of reasons:
 - The kingdom of Christ follows the final Gentile kingdom in that it is established

after the overthrow of all other world kingdoms (i.e. it at no point runs contemporaneously with the kingdoms of the Gentiles).

- The kingdom of Christ follows the final phase of the final Gentile kingdom (a phase into which that kingdom has not yet developed).
- The kingdom of Christ follows the final ruler (Antichrist) of the final phase of the final Gentile kingdom. His coming and career are yet future as the New Testament makes clear (Matt 24:5, 15; 2 Thess 2:3-4; 1 John 2:18; Rev 13:17; 19).
- The kingdom of Christ takes over the other kingdoms in power and glory, not one of suffering for Him and His saints as is the present age (John 15; Col 1:23-24).
- The kingdom of Christ is distinctly Jewish in nature (the “saints” in this text are Jewish).
- The kingdom of Christ will be similar to the ones that preceded it in that it will be visible and earthly.
- For these reasons, the kingdom of God could not be existent today in the sense that Daniel 7 has in view.



Daniel 7:28 ~ At this point the revelation ended. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts were greatly alarming me and my face grew pale, but I kept the matter to myself.

- Just as the vision itself brought Daniel great distress (vs. 15), the interpretation of it did as well.

C. Theology Notes

1. Why Repeat the Prophecy of the Four Kingdoms in Chapters 2 and 7?
- “First, the two accounts complement each other in that they each provide details not found in the other. Second, there may be truth to the idea that the image with its glittering metals portrays the world’s kingdoms from humanity’s viewpoint –

impressive and great, whereas the beasts depict these earthly kingdoms from God's perspective – vicious and destructive. Third, the message probably was repeated to emphasize its certainty...the revelation of the four kingdoms in Daniel may have been presented in two forms in order to underscore the certainty of this amazing prophecy."¹⁷⁰

D. Preaching Helps

1. Todd's Outline (2 sermons):

The Great Panorama of History (vs. 1-8) The Impending Judgment of God (vs. 9-12) The Future Kingdom of Christ (vs. 13-28)

Chapter 8

YOUTH MINISTRIES

I Will Go: Maximizing Opportunities to Create Resources

Key Verse: 2 Kings 4:2-3 – “Tell me, what do you have in the house?”

DAY 1

The Foundation – Spirituality as the Ultimate Resource

Theme Verse: Matthew 6:33 – “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

Supporting Text: John 15:5 – “Without Me you can do nothing.”

Devotional Reflection

In a world that glorifies hustle and material gain, many chase resources without realizing the source of all true blessings—God Himself. Spirituality is not a compartment of life but the foundation for everything else. Without a solid spiritual life, even the best plans crumble. As Jesus said, “What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?” (Mark 8:36).

Ellen G. White reminds us:

“Success in any line demands a definite aim. He who would achieve true success in life must keep steadily in view the aim worthy of his endeavor.” (Education, p. 262)

Our first and greatest aim must be a relationship with God. When we are connected to Christ, our creativity, resilience, and ability to create resources grow exponentially. We begin to see opportunities that others miss, because we are guided by divine wisdom.

Reflection Points

How is my relationship with God shaping my daily decisions?

What resources might God want to unlock in my life through deeper faith?

Am I seeking God’s kingdom first, or am I chasing things that fade?

Discussion Questions

What are some ways young people can strengthen their spirituality amidst busy schedules and social distractions?

Can you think of a time when seeking God first helped you unlock an unexpected opportunity?

How can we encourage one another to stay spiritually focused during this camp and beyond?

Challenge for the Day

Spend 30 minutes today in quiet reflection and prayer. Ask God to reveal one area of your life where He wants to grow you spiritually. Write it down, and pray for it throughout the week.

Group Engagement Strategy

End with a prayer circle: Each person shares one word or phrase describing what they hope God will do in their life this week (e.g., “Focus,” “Faith,” “Courage”). After each shares, another person prays briefly for them.

DAY 2:

Navigating Technology – A Tool for Good or a Trap for Distraction?

Theme Verse: 1 Corinthians 10:31 – “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

Supporting Text: Philippians 4:8 – “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true... noble... just... pure... lovely... of good report, if there is any virtue... meditate on these things.”

Devotional Reflection

Technology has become an inseparable part of our daily lives—from smartphones to social media, from online learning to digital evangelism. But how we use it can either build us up or break us down. Technology itself is neutral, but our choices determine whether it becomes a tool for God’s glory or a distraction that pulls us away from Him.

Ellen G. White warned:

“Satan is constantly devising means to occupy the mind and divert attention from the great truths of God’s Word.” (The Great Controversy, p. 488)

Today, the devil uses technology to achieve this more than ever before. But God also wants to use technology for good! It can be a powerful tool for sharing the gospel, learning, and growing in knowledge.

The key is not whether we use technology, but how we use it. Are we in control, or is it controlling us?

Reflection Points

What role does technology play in my spiritual life—does it help or hinder my growth?

How much time do I spend on digital platforms daily, and what percentage of it glorifies God?

Am I using technology as a resource for ministry, learning, and productivity?

Discussion Questions

How has technology influenced your walk with God—both positively and negatively?

What are some boundaries we can set to avoid digital addiction or distractions?

Can technology be a platform for youth to create resources for God’s kingdom? How?

Practical Activity: “Digital Audit Challenge” Instructions:

Each participant lists the top 5 apps or websites they spend the most time on. For each, ask:

How much time do I spend here daily?

Is this time helping me grow spiritually, mentally, or socially?

What changes can I make to ensure this platform is a tool for good?

Create an “Action Plan” to adjust or limit usage where necessary.

Optional: Set a Digital Sabbath day (one day a week to unplug from non- essential devices).

Challenge for the Day

Pick one area of technology (e.g., social media, gaming, streaming) and fast from it for 24 hours. Instead, spend that time reading the Bible, praying, or learning a new skill that honors God.

Closing Thought

Ellen G. White reminds us:

“God desires that the perceptive faculties be cultivated, that we may have a correct understanding of our duties and responsibilities.” (Messages to Young People, p. 69) Let us use technology wisely, so it serves us and glorifies God—never the other way around.

DAY 3:

Health Matters – Maximizing Your Body as God’s Resource

Theme Verse: 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 – “Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you...? Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

Supporting Text: 3 John 1:2 – “Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.”

Devotional Reflection

Our health is one of the greatest resources God has entrusted to us. Without a healthy body and mind, it becomes difficult to fully serve God and others. Health is not just about physical strength—it includes mental clarity, emotional balance, and spiritual vitality. When we neglect our health, we limit the opportunities God can open in our lives.

Ellen G. White emphasizes:

“It is a duty to know how to preserve the body in the very best condition, and it is a sacred duty to obey the laws of health.” (Counsels on Health, p. 38)

She also warns that neglecting health principles is like misusing a gift God has given. If we truly desire to maximize our resources, we must start with our own bodies, for they are the living temples of the Holy Spirit.

Reflection Points

Am I treating my body as a sacred trust from God?

What habits—good or bad—are shaping my health today?

How does my physical health impact my ability to serve God and others?

Discussion Questions

What are some unhealthy habits that youth struggle with today (e.g., diet, sleep, exercise, screen time)?

How can we make small but meaningful changes to improve our health?

How does a healthy body empower us to create resources and maximize our God-given opportunities?

Challenge for the Day

Choose one healthy action to implement today (e.g., go for a 30-minute walk, eat a balanced meal, get 8 hours of sleep). Reflect on how this simple act can build your capacity to serve God.

Closing Thought

Ellen G. White says:

“The health should be as sacredly guarded as the character.” (Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 3, p. 485)

Let’s honor God by caring for our health, so we can be effective in His service.

DAY 4:

Courtship – God’s Blueprint for Love and Relationships

Theme Verse: Proverbs 4:23 – “Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.” Supporting Text: 2 Corinthians 6:14 – “Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness?”

Devotional Reflection

Courtship is a sacred season of preparation, not just a romantic adventure. It is about two people prayerfully discerning God’s will for their future together. The world’s view of relationships often promotes instant gratification, casual dating, and self-centered love. But God’s design is intentional, purposeful, and grounded in spiritual growth.

Ellen G. White writes:

“True love is a high and holy principle, altogether different in character from that love which is awakened by impulse and which suddenly dies when severely tested.” (Messages to Young People, p. 435)

Courtship is a time to build character, seek God’s guidance, and develop emotional and spiritual compatibility. It’s not just about feelings—it’s about preparation for a lifelong partnership in Christ’s service.

Reflection Points

Am I seeking God’s will in my relationships, or following my feelings and desires?

What qualities should I develop in myself before I consider courtship?

How can I honor God in my interactions with the opposite sex?

Discussion Questions

What are the dangers of rushing into a romantic relationship without prayerful consideration?

How can a couple in courtship glorify God and support each other’s spiritual growth?

Why is it important to consider character over chemistry when choosing a life partner?

Practical Activity: “My Courtship Checklist”

Instructions:

Write a personal checklist titled: “What I’m looking for in a Godly Relationship.”

Include at least 5 character traits (e.g., prayerfulness, kindness, integrity, purpose-driven life, respect).

Also write 3 personal goals to prepare for a healthy relationship (e.g., growing in faith, learning communication skills, and serving in ministry).

Share one item from your list with a partner or small group.

Challenge for the Day

Write a prayer letter to God, asking for His guidance in your relationships. Surrender your desires and ask Him to prepare both you and your future spouse for a Christ-centered courtship.

Closing Thought

Ellen G. White counsels:

“Let every step toward a marriage alliance be characterized by modesty, simplicity, sincerity, and an earnest purpose to please and honor God.” (The Adventist Home, p. 49)

Let us view courtship as a sacred journey, not just a social experience. In God’s time, He will guide the right hearts together for His glory.

DAY 5:

Finances – Managing God’s Resources Wisely

Theme Verse: Proverbs 3:9-10 – “Honor the Lord with your possessions, and with the first fruits of all your increase; so your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine.”

Supporting Text: Luke 16:10 – “He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much...”

Devotional Reflection

Money is a tool—not the goal. As young people, we are often tempted to chase after wealth, but God calls us to faithful stewardship, not just accumulation. Every coin, every talent, every opportunity is a resource God entrusts to us. The way we manage our finances today can either limit or expand our ability to serve Him tomorrow.

Ellen G. White wisely counsels:

“Money is not ours; houses and lands, pictures and furniture, and everything we possess are but lent us by the Lord. He has entrusted them to us to test us, to see if we will be wise stewards over His goods.” (Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 1, p. 197)

God’s plan for financial management includes giving (tithes and offerings), saving, investing wisely, and spending responsibly. True success is not in how much we have, but in how we use what we have for God’s glory.

Reflection Points

Do I see my money and possessions as mine or as God’s resources?

How can I practice contentment and generosity even when I have little?

What small steps can I take today to build financial habits that honor God?

Discussion Questions

Why is it important to return tithe and give offerings as a youth?

How can poor financial habits (e.g., impulse buying, debt) affect our ability to serve God?

What are some practical ways young people can create financial resources (e.g., side jobs, skills development, budgeting)?

Practical Activity: “My Budget Plan” Instructions:

Create a simple personal budget using this template:

Income (e.g., allowance, side job): ksh

Tithe (10%): ksh

Offerings: ksh

Savings (10-20%): ksh

Needs (e.g., school, transport): ksh

Wants (e.g., clothes, entertainment): ksh

Discuss in pairs: What financial goals can you set this month (e.g., save for a project, give a special offering)?

Challenge for the Day

Plan a “Give Back Project.” As a group, identify a need in your community (e.g., feeding the hungry, buying Bibles, helping a student). Pool your resources and create a simple plan to meet that need this week.

Group Engagement Strategy

Organize a “Financial Wisdom Workshop.” Invite a Christian financial expert to speak on topics like budgeting, debt, investments, and giving. Follow with a Q&A session where youth can ask practical money management questions.

Closing Thought

Ellen G. White reminds us:

“Let us not waste our means in unnecessary things, but let us be wise stewards, laying up treasure in heaven.” (Messages to Young People, p. 310)

Let’s remember: It’s not about how much we have, but how much we faithfully manage for God’s mission.

As we close this camp meeting, remember that God has placed within you the seeds of greatness. Your spiritual gifts, time, skills, relationships, and opportunities are not just random blessings—they are tools for mission. God calls you to maximize these resources, not for selfish gain, but to advance His kingdom on earth.

Ephesians 5:15-16 says:

“See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”

God is looking for faithful stewards—young men and women who will say, “Lord, here I am; I will go. I will use my talents, my time, my influence, and even my finances to bless others.”

Chapter 9

FAMILY LIFE

PARENTING THE BOY CHILD

INTRODUCTION

Parenting entails privileges and responsibilities. It is the most significant responsibility that human beings were assigned. When parenting, we are answerable directly to God and not to man. Knowing this, the Devil directs many arrows toward our children, especially those in the adolescent stage of development, to paralyze the advancement of God's King. As parents, we are continually overwhelmed by what the world offers to our children and the risky choices they make.

This lesson intends to remind parents that our children are not here on earth to stay. God has prepared a better home for all His faithful children (John 14:1- 3,2Peter 3:12-13). Therefore, parents should do their parenting role with eternity in perspective. While waiting for the fulfilment of the promise of Jesus' return, as parents, we need to help our children strengthen their moral compasses as they travel here on earth, seeking to become light to the world.

Parenting the Boy Child –The Neglected Side of Parenting

In our society, we have often focused heavily on the girl child, while the boy child has sometimes been left behind, slipping through the cracks. Adolescent boys experience a range of emotions, and without proper guidance, they may struggle to find the solid foundation they need. If God has entrusted you with the responsibility of raising a young boy, He has given you both a great responsibility and a tremendous blessing. It is my prayer that God give us power to learn to touch, enhance the lives of the boys. When you can say that you have successfully raised a boy to become a man of high character and faith, you will understand how true it is that when the man you have raised is right, your world will also be right. "Is the young Man safe" 2Sam. 18:29

LESSON ONE

WHY A BOY CHILD?

We live in a world that has focused so much on parenting and empowering the girl child that it seems the boy child has been left behind, or worse off, left alone to figure out life by themselves in all spheres; be it academics, social life, or even spiritual life. Society has been focusing on the girl child and left boys to be taught by the world.

Early Status of Women "Women are weak and artificial and not capable of reasoning (Jean-Jacques Rousseau – French Philosopher, 1762).

PRE -19th CENTURY

In many traditional societies, women's subordination was justified through religion, philosophy, and social norms. Thinkers like Aristotle argued that women are naturally weaker and suited for domestic roles, while religious texts often emphasized female subservience. Laws restricted women's in marriage, property ownership, and political participation.

EARLY RESISTANCE AND FEMINIST THOUGHT (17th -19th Century)

Enlightenment thinkers such as Mary Wollstonecraft (*A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, 1792), challenged these ideas by advocating for women's education and equality.

Mary Wollstonecraft (1759- 1797)

A Vindication of Women Rights (1792)

Ancestors of feminism – women rights movement:

Promoted education of girls positively

Did not want to detach women with domestic sphere.

Focused on improving status of mothers in home Her Famous Quotation

“I do not wish them women to have power over men; but over themselves.”

“It is time to effect a revolution in female manners – time to restore to them their lost dignity.”

“Strengthen the female mind by enlarging it, and there will be an end to blind obedience.”

She believed that ignorance kept women oppressed and that education was the path to equality.

Since the 19th Century the focus has been on a Girl Child FEMINISM MOVEMENTS

First Wave (1820- 1960s)-Equal Rights – Public Sphere

Education, Suffrage, Work opportunities

Primary focus was on legal and political equality, right to vote, and property right

Second Wave (1960 -1980s)-

Challenging Gender roles and expanding women's right beyond politics

“One is not born a woman: one becomes a woman.” Simone de Beauvoir

Third Wave (1990s – 2012)

Intersectionality;

Domestic violence

Individual identity

LGBTQ+ Rights

Argument – The difference between men and women did not exist. Both genders are the

Caring for the children is primary the responsibility of the mother.

The father's failure to take responsibility and leadership has created unhappy, fractured homes and society and is preparing many children for eternal destruction Proverbs 19:18 “Discipline your son”

A well-trained boy is a starting point for stabilizing society, the church, and families. Strong leaders are the result of positive parenting.

The Experience of Eli and His Sons

1Sam. 2:27- 36; 3:14; Proverbs 19:18

The lack of discipline to the Eli's sons:

the ark of the covenant was captured by Philistines (1Sam. 4:10-11)

The sons died in a battle the same day 1Sam. 4:10-11

Eli hearing the news fell and break his neck 1Sam. 4:18

Phinehas' child named Ichabod (the glory has departed from Israel) 1Sam. 4:21-22

Phinehas wife died in childbirth (1Sam.4:19-22)

The priestly line of Eli was replaced by Zadok (1kings 2:27, 35)

Emphasis

A well trained boy is the foundation of a stable society, church, and family.

Strong leaders are often the product of positive parenting, which involves instruction, love, and discipline

The priest Eli failed in his parenting – he used Permissive parenting styles

He had no control over his sons

LESSON TWO

BOY CHILD

GOD'S GRACE IN PARENTING

Parenting a boy child has many things but for time sake lets deal with five aspect: grace, love; challenges; accountability and an immoral world. By grace we mean God's unearned, undeserved favour and love toward humanity, expressed in Jesus Christ, and brings salvation, empowerment and restoration.

The burden of this an interactive session is on God's grace in parenting a boy child. God's grace because He deserves to be the centre of all parental activity especially for the boy child. We want to focus on three things:

Parenting challenge,

God's love, and

Parenting accountability in an immoral world.

Parenting Challenges and God's Grace

(In groups of three discuss (5minutes) a time when you felt weak or inadequate as a parent). How can remembering God's grace help us in moments of parenting frustration or failure? And how does acknowledging our own sinfulness help us parents with more grace?

Parenting as a Challenging Role by Reason of Weariness observation

Parenting is one of the most demanding roles in life, filled with moments of frustration, doubt, and exhaustion. No parent is perfect, and despite our best efforts, children can be challenging. Proverb 22:6 reminds us to "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it," but this process is often fraught with difficulties. Read the verses 2Corinthians 12:9, Zachariah 4:6, Ephesians 2:8-9.

"Parents have a solemn, sacred work to perform in educating their children, by precept and example. They are under obligation to God to present their children to Him fitted at a very early period to receive an intelligent knowledge of what is comprehended in being a follower of Christ." E. G. White. 15 Ltns , Ms 59, 1900.

Parenting as a challenging Role by Reason of the Reality of Sin in Parenting Observation

Both parents and children are sinners, and parenting occurs in a world under spiritual attack. Romans 3:23 states, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." This reality underscores the need for divine intervention in parenting.

Ephesians 6:12, 2Corinthians 10:3-4, Romans 8:38-39

"Let us bear in mind that we are dealing with souls that Christ has purchased with infinite cost to Himself." FCE 280

God's Encouragement in the Challenging Parental Role

God's grace is sufficient for every parenting challenge. When we feel weak, His strength is made perfect in our weakness (2Cor. 12:9). This grace empowers us to extend love, patience, and forgiveness to our children. James 4:6, Proverbs 3:34, Matthew 23:12.

"God's grace is sufficient for every trial, and His strength is made perfect in weakness." SC 100

There are no easy fixes in parenting adolescent boys. Sin looks at us and laughs at our efforts to bring boys back to the plan of salvation. We are grateful for every promise in the Bible that encourages us to patiently persist in pointing our sons back to God.

Parents Extending God's Love and Grace

Activity: Love in Action Journaling

Write one practical way you can show God's love and grace to a boy child this week (e.g., spending quality time, offering forgiveness, speaking encouraging words). How can a small acts of love and grace have a lasting impact on children?

Parents are called to reflect God's love and grace in their parenting. Eph.6:4 advises, "Fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord." Read the following verses: Prov. 15:1, Hebrews 12:5-6, Eph. 4:29

"Parents should remember that they are living, speaking, and acting in the presence of God."

RH March 13, 1894, par.3

The Importance of Prayer in Parenting

Prayer is a vital tool for parents. Philippians 4:6-7, 1Thess. 5:17, Col.4:2, Luke 18:1.

"Prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's store house." Steps to Christ, 94.

The Prodigal Son: Lessons in Love and Grace

The story of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32) illustrate a father's unconditional love and the Holy Spirit's pleading voice. It reminds us of God's promise in Malachi 4:5-6 to turn the hearts of parents and children toward each. Read (Luke 15:20; Matthew 9:36; Isaiah 30:18)

"The father's love represents the love of God, who welcomes the repentant sinner with open arms." COL. 198

Discipline your boy child motivated by love. We extend God's love as the Father welcome the prodigal. Pray endlessly.

Parenting With Accountability in an Immoral World

Activity: Moral challenges brain storm

In groups of twos brainstorm the top moral challenges boys face today (e.g., peer pressure, social media, and secular culture). How can we equip our children to stand firm in their faith in a morally challenging world?

Parenting in an Immoral World

The world today is filled with moral challenges, making it difficult to raise God-fearing children. Parents must rely on God's grace while actively teaching biblical values. There is hope read the following verses, Matt.19:26, Jeremiah 32:27, Mark 10:27.

In this age of corruption, parents must be vigilant in guarding their children from the influences of the world. CG.45

Activity: Family Plan

Have regular morning and evening worship. Create a simple family plan for teaching biblical values at home. This could include family worship ideas, memory verses, or discussions about God's commandments. Do you take time to think on what you will do with your son?

Accountability to God Observation

Parents are accountable for representing God's authority and teaching His standards. Deut. 6:6-7, Prov. 29:17, 3john 1:4, Heb. 12:11.

Parents will be held accountable for the way they have trained their children.AH192.

Activity: Family Reconciliation

Think (reflect) on any strained relationships between you and a boy in your family. Things that caused 'emotional distance', 'miscommunication', 'lack of trust', 'tension and conflict' etc. between you and a son. You favoured another child', you 'neglected' your son, you 'broke your promise' to son, you have 'different goals' to your son, you have 'poor communication', or 'historical hurt' to you son etc. Write a three – sentence letter or plan a conversation to begin the process of reconciliation.

How can we model reconciliation and forgiveness in our families?

Elijah's Message for Today

Malachi 4:5-6, reconciliation; Isa. 44: 3; Joel 2:28. Elijah's work is a type of that must be done in these last days. PK 227;

The world is immoral (morally wrong relative to the will of God). The immorality of people doesn't remove our accountability in raising boys who are in a deep relationship with God.

Overall Summary

God's Faithfulness in Parenting

While parents may fail, God remains a perfect Father. He fixes, He restores, and He empowers us. His grace ensures effective parenting is possible through Him. Job 42:2, Luke 1:37, Isaiah 40:29.

God's grace is sufficient to meet every need, and His power is made perfect in our weakness. DA 300.

LESSON THREE

PARENTING STYLES

Introduction

Parenting styles refer to the different approaches that parents use to raise and interact with their children. These styles are based on factors such as discipline, communication, support and control. These styles can communicate as much to the young person as the words themselves.

Group Discussion

-What was your overall closeness of your childhood relationship with your parents?

How has this relationship affected your parenting styles (negatively or positively)?

Parenting Styles

Psychologist Diana Baumrind identified four main parenting styles:

Authoritative parenting

Authoritarian parenting

Permissive parenting

Neglectful (uninvolved) parenting

Neglectful

Inconsistent - Lack of structure and dependable routine

Lack of guidance - Lack of attention and involvement with the child

Lack of concern for the child's need – Children assuming parental responsibility

Permissive

Inconsistent limits

Inconsistent discipline

Much affection and attention

The experience of Eli and his sons – 1Sam.2:27-36; 3:14

Eli did not rule his own household

Eli was an indulgent father...he did not exercise his authority to correct the evil habits and passion of his children.

Rather than contend with them, or punish them, he would submit to their will and give them their own way.

But Eli shrank from this duty, because it involved crossing the will of his son's and would make it necessary to punish and deny them.

Proverbs 19:18 "Discipline your son."

Authoritarian

Unrealistic demands

Excessive force and punishment

Lack of concern for the child's needs

Harsh and dictatorial parental attitudes

Lack of sympathy

Authoritarian parent is one who "values obedience as a virtue and favours punitive, forceful measures to curb self-will at points where the child's actions or beliefs conflict with what [the parent] think is right or correct." The authoritarian parent is typically characterized by rules without relationship and law without love. An environment at home is oftentimes rigid and inflexible. An atmosphere of law, rather than grace, tends to abound. (Col.3:21).

Young people coming from authoritarian homes know that Mom and Dad mean business when a command is not obeyed. Spanking (when they were younger), grounding, and loss of privileges are all familiar territory to these youths. Issues of contention are not diplomatically discussed or compromised.

AUTHORITATIVE

While firmness and freedom characterize the authoritarian and permissive styles of parenting, respectively the authoritative approach seeks to present a model of balance between the two. The majority of Christian parents strive for a fair but firm authoritative and democratic approach.

"The authoritative style of parenting is characterized by supportive, encouraging, and loving manner in raising a child according to the teaching of Scripture." At the same time, parents recognize that teens are younger, less mature, and less knowledgeable in many areas of life. At times, they will require parental discipline with a firm hand and steady confidence.

A high investment of time and resources.

Reciprocity of rights and responsibilities in the parent-child relationship.

A well-ordered regimen

A warm, loving relationships

Empowerment of the child self-government

Now that we've had a chance to examine the dynamics of several parenting styles, let's continue to "check under the hood" of the Christian family in terms of what's been modelled. For as the familiar saying goes, "More is caught than taught."

Emphasis

A well trained boy is the foundation of stable society, church, and family

Strong leaders are often the product of positive parenting, which involves instruction, love, and discipline

The priest Eli failed in his parenting – he used permissive parenting style.

He had no control over his sons

Parenting is about balancing control and support by the grace of God.

LESSON FOUR

What Is Your Point of Reference?

Guiding Boys to find their moral compass.

Introduction

Boys are male children. They don't know much. Their education process must be dressed in simplicity with the aim to communicate and not just impress. This is why we will ask them this simple question - what is your point of reference? This question will be expounded by showing example of how a point of reference works.

When traveling in a city that is built up and you can easily get lost, you need a point of reference. May be a tall greenhouse like Afya Center in Nairobi. As you move around, you keep looking at it to know exactly where you are. That is a point of reference. You refer to it to know if you are right or wrong.

The concept of morality also has the desire to establish what is right and what is wrong. This moral compass has something to do with giving directions, just as a point of reference gives directions.

Scene 1

Footballers / or whatever sportsmen have rules that are a point of reference If they touch the ball by hand they remember the rule the point of reference

If the ball goes outside the marked line, they remember the point of reference If they score they celebrate because the point of reference says its a score

If a footballer shoots very nicely into his own goal, even if it is a good shot, it will never be considered a good shot because according to the rules, the point of reference, it is an own goal and that is shameful

Footballers dress according to the point of reference Footballers eat and train according to the point of reference That is true of every sports person

The best footballers are best because of their faithfulness to the point of reference

Do they start today and win tomorrow? No! They do it over many years in order to be excellent celebrities today

Unless you start a life of discipline today, you will not be a winner tomorrow

Scene 2

Soldiers have a point of reference dressing

Addressing superiors How to use firearms

They don't become Generals today, it takes many years of training and experience for them to be excellent soldiers

It will take you many years but you must begin today and be consistent

Scene 3

Musicians have a point of reference Training the voice

Managing stage fright

They follow the rules for many years and then excellence comes

You must follow the rules for many years for excellence to be your lifestyle

Scene 4

Wealthy business people have a point of reference Focus on profit

Identifying a good deal and a potential con game saving and saving

They do it for many years before we discover that they are richest men you must begin now handling money like a wealthy business man

Scene 5

Pilots, Doctors, Teachers, Lawyers, all professions have a point of reference that helps them know if they are on track or losing it is not an instant development of sticking to the point of reference, it comes with daily sacrifices, training and learning - you must begin today my son

Scene 6

Weight Lifters have a point of reference Diet to build muscle

Type of exercise for certain muscles Signs of progress

You become great after a long time of training and now you have muscles you can flex around - it takes faithfulness to the point of reference and time, many years of training

Questions

What will happen to sports if there was no point of reference?

What will happen to soldiers if they have no point of reference on when to shoot and when not to shoot?

Israelites were a huge crowd of about two million people. Did they need rules to guide them? A point of reference? What if there was no point of reference telling everybody not to steal or kill? How would life be?

Do we need a moral compass that determines what is right and what is wrong? Is it necessary?

What was Joseph's point of reference when he responded to Mrs. Potiphar? (Genesis 39:9)

What was Jesus' point of reference? (Matthew 4:4,7,10)

If P DIDDY was your point of reference and now he has been found to be a dangerous criminal who got wealth the wrong way and abused people and particularly children - what happens to your sense of direction?

If books of certain theories become your point of reference and then better counter theories come up, dismissing your previous position, wouldn't you be left swaying in confusion?

People both great and small , and books both great and insignificant, will always change and cant be relied on to lead anyone anywhere

What do you think about the Bible and it's consistent for at least 2,000 years? What do you think about the faith of our fathers, their faith in God? - Don't we have a more reliable moral compass? Do we really lack a point of reference?

Defining Morality and Morals

These are not easy words to define in the strict sense of the definition. Casual superficial definitions may suffice, but it is important to note that there is more to the words. What is morality? What do we mean by saying someone is moral?

"Morality refers to the set of standards that enable people to live cooperatively in groups. It's what societies determine to be "right" and "acceptable." [1].

Morality also is a set of codes and rules that enable one or a group to judge rights, welfare, and justice. It may be a sense or intuition that discriminates between normative and moral behaviors, which guide people to act correctly. Philosophers often employ a conception of morality in the descriptive sense to argue for a conception of morality in the normative sense." (Wong, D., Page1:2013) [2].

Even moral realists who offer fully developed moral theories do not tend to offer anything like a definition of morality. Instead, what these philosophers usually offer is a justification of a set of norms with which they take their audience already to be acquainted. In effect, they tacitly pick morality out by reference to certain salient and relative uncontroversial bits of its content:

that it prohibits killing, stealing, deceiving, cheating, and so on. In fact, this would not be a bad way of defining morality, if the point of such a definition were only to be relatively theory-neutral, and to allow theorizing to begin. We could call it a “reference-fixing definition” or “substantive definition” (see Prinz and Nichols 2010: 122).

“A reference-fixing definition of morality in the normative sense is not, however, a definition in the sense at issue in this entry. It only specifies certain salient bits of content, and leaves completely implicit what it is about that content that makes it count as moral. For our purposes, a better schema for a definition is the following: morality is (or would be) the behavioral code that all rational persons, under certain specified conditions, would endorse. Some who offer a definition that fits this schema also argue that there is no such code. These, again, are skeptics about morality in the normative sense.”

The right morality amidst plurality of morals

I asked AI to give me a summary about Moral plurality. The following is a very good summary done by AI.

“The plurality of morals, also known as moral pluralism, is the idea that there are many different and valid moral values. It's a philosophical position that recognizes the complexity of human life and the diversity of human experiences.”

“Key ideas of moral pluralism

Multiple values: There are many different values, virtues, and moral principles that can be equally valid.

Conflicting values: It's possible for different moral values to conflict with each other.

Open-mindedness: Moral pluralists are open to considering different points of view.

Multiple approaches: No single philosophical approach can always provide all the answers.

Respect: Moral pluralists believe that competing moral views should be respected.

“Implications of moral pluralism

Moral pluralism can lead to real moral dilemmas.

It can lead to different but equally acceptable moralities within a society.

It encourages respect for different perspectives.

It's important in culturally and ethnically diverse societies.”

From that AI Generated response to moral pluralism we conclude that we Adventists should have a single morality, but we do recognize the existence of plurality in the world.

Morality as an identity to be proud of

“Identity theories generally agree that the identity a person comes to hold through their unique values and interpretations of the events in their life can help explain people's behavior (Meltzer et al., 2020). That is to say, identity theories propose that people are more likely to behave in ways that hold deeper subjective meaning and value, and closely relate to their unique identity (Brandl & Bullinger, 2016).

Additionally, identity theories postulate that people tend to collaboratively behave alongside other people or within their social roles and environments to accomplish a valued goal or outcome (Couch et al., 1986). Identity theories describe how people are also likely to

experience cognitive distress when their identity is not externally validated and behave in ways that confirm their identity (Strachan et al., 2018). For example, if a person values learning and education but is told they are not a good student, identity theories would argue that the person may verbally argue to validate their study plan or study for longer periods of time to protect their student identity and prove their dedication to learning.”

What is a moral compass?

“A set of beliefs or values that help guide ethical decisions, judgments, and behavior: an internal sense of right and wrong” - Merriam Webster

What Is Your Point of Reference?

“A fact forming the basis of an evaluation or assessment; criterion. A point of reference is something which you use to help you understand a situation.” - Collins Dictionary

What is a point of reference? - a guiding principle

What is a moral compass? - a constant reference to what is right and wrong

A compass is the device we keep referring to as we travel so that we do not get lost

A point of reference helps us to remain on course and on point without straying and deviating
A moral compass is a point of reference.”

Own it boy!

You have a football team you proudly associate with and defend, now have a faith you proudly associate with and defend

You have celebrities you admire and will shave like them, dress like them, - now have a hero in Jesus and Bible characters who God commended

Make the Bible your point of reference

When you meet friends who challenge the norms at home - refer to the Bible

When you are tempted to consider LGBTQ - refer to the Bible

When you are tempted to cheat and steal - refer to the Bible

When someone annoys you, even your girlfriend - refer to the Bible

4. The Bible is your moral compass! It is your point of reference

References

Borba M. (2001). Building Moral Intelligence: The Seven Essential Virtues that Teach Kids to Do the Right Thing.

Brandl, J., & Bullinger, B. (2016). Individuals' considerations when responding to competing logics: Insights from identity control theory. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 26(2), 181–192.



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I Will Go

Maximizing Opportunities for Wealth Creation

2025 CAMP MEETINGS

TEXT | 2 Kings 4:1–7
SONGS | Hymnal 88,
NZK 38

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