

A SONG OF
PRAISE

PSALM 103



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- ❖ Bless—*barak*. When God blesses a person, it means that God endows him with gifts or blessings from on high. When a man blesses God, he praises (or acknowledges) God for these gifts, and when a person blesses someone else, he is expressing his wish that the person be blessed with gifts from God.
- ❖ Forget not the benefits of God—forgiveness, healing, redemption, lovingkindness, tender mercies, food, youth renewed
- ❖ Oppressed—exploit, wrong, defraud, abuse of power; the trampling, crushing, burdening those of lower station
- ❖ Redeemed—to reclaim, bring into safety
- ❖ Forgiveness—vs. 3, 10-12—justification
- ❖ Keep covenant and do his commandments—sanctification; keep—exercise great care over and do—do, make, accomplish

SANCTIFICATION—V. 8

For this is the will of God, *even* your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: (1 Thessalonians 4:3)

For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.
(1 Thessalonians 4:7)

For I *am* the Lord your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I *am* holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. (Leviticus 11:44)

Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. (John 17:17)

Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: (Hebrews 12:14)

Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? (John 10:36)

And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. (John 17:19)

In the holy Scriptures, sanctification sometimes consists in **setting apart or consecrating to a sacred or religious use**. In this sense the seventh day, the first-born, mount Sinai, the priests, the sanctuary and its utensils, the temple at Jerusalem, and the prophets, were sanctified. . . . In this sense even Christ was sanctified, when he was set apart to the work of man's redemption. (Daniel T. Bourdeau, *Sanctification*, p. 5.3)

- ❖ Genesis 2:3—Seventh day
- ❖ Exodus 13:2—Firstborn
- ❖ Jeremiah 1:5—Before birth

This is indeed a great work, and the Scriptures plainly teach that God **sanctifies his people**. Exodus 31:13; Ezekiel 20:12; John 17:17; Hebrews 2:11. God graciously provides and urges the means of sanctification, and helps his people to use them. It is impossible for man to devise means whereby he can sanctify himself, or to attain to holiness by his own strength. Man must accept the means which God has devised, and the gracious assistance which he affords. (Bourdeau, *Sanctification*, p. 6.3)

The plan of God is such that **we must co-operate with him in this work**. This is seen in the following texts: “Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the Lord your God. And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the Lord which sanctify you.” Leviticus 20:7, 8. “Cleanse your hands ye sinners, and purify your hearts ye double-minded.” “Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.” “Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure.” “Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly.” James 4:8; 2 Corinthians 7:1; John 3:3; 1 Thessalonians 5:23. (Bourdeau, *Sanctification*, p. 6.4)

We say that the third message is the last message of mercy, because it is followed by the appearing of one like unto the Son of man on the white cloud to gather the harvest of the earth. Verses 14, 15. Again, the unmixed wrath of God, which is the same as the seven last plagues, (compare Revelation 14:9, 10; 15:1; 16:1, 2,) follows, upon all those who do not heed it, hence there can be no later message by which men can be saved.

It is evident from the language of **this message** [Revelation 14:9–12] **that it will develop a holy people**, a people of whom it can be said, “Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” The same class are brought to view in Revelation 12:17, as the remnant (or last end) of the woman’s (or church’s) seed, which keep the commandments of the God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. (Bourdeau, *Sanctification*, p. 16.1–2)

The faith of Jesus is something that is *kept* or obeyed in connection with the commandments of God. It cannot simply mean the confidence of Jesus, neither can it really mean the confidence we should have in Jesus. It must denote the form of doctrine taught by Jesus, which embraces the means of salvation from sin and its curse, and all the healing and restoring ordinances, precepts, and doctrines of Christ as recorded in the New Testament. This faith can be kept or obeyed. See Acts 6:7; Romans 1:5; 2 Timothy 4:7; Jude 3; Revelation 2:13. (Bourdeau, *Sanctification*, p. 17.1)

The result of this message in developing **a people** who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, proves that previously, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus had not all been kept. The little horn, spoken of by Daniel, and symbolizing Papacy, had trodden the truth to the ground and practiced and prospered during its dark reign. Daniel 7:25; 8:12. A great amount of truth pertaining to the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, had been restored under the glorious reformation, and by God's people since the reformation. Yet there remained other important truths to be fully brought to light under the last merciful message to man. Among these is found the truth of the Sabbath. (Bourdeau, *Sanctification*, p. 18.1)

JUSTIFICATION AND
JUDGMENT—V. 6

I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne *was like* the fiery flame, *and* his wheels *as* burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: **the judgment was set, and the books were opened.** (Daniel 7:9–10)

The subject of **the sanctuary and the investigative judgment should be clearly understood** by the people of God. All need a knowledge for themselves of the position and work of their great High Priest. Otherwise it will be impossible for them to exercise the faith which is essential at this time or to occupy the position which God designs them to fill. Every individual has a soul to save or to lose. Each has a case pending at the bar of God. Each must meet the great Judge face to face. How important, then, that every mind contemplate often the solemn scene when the judgment shall sit and **the books shall be opened**, when, with Daniel, every individual must stand in his lot, at the end of the days. (*GC 488.2*)

As the typical cleansing of the earthly was accomplished by the removal of the sins by which it had been polluted, so the actual cleansing of the heavenly is to be accomplished by the removal, or blotting out, of the sins which are there recorded. But before this can be accomplished, **there must be an examination of the books of record** to determine who, through repentance of sin and faith in Christ, are entitled to the benefits of His atonement. The cleansing of the sanctuary therefore involves a work of investigation a work of judgment. This work must be performed prior to the coming of Christ to redeem His people. (GC 421)

At the time appointed for the judgment—the close of the 2300 days, in 1844—began the work of investigation and blotting out of sins. All who have ever taken upon themselves the name of Christ must pass its searching scrutiny. Both the living and the dead are to be judged ‘out of those things which were **written in the books**, according to their works.’ (*GC* 486.1)

THE BOOKS

The books of record in heaven, in which the names and the deeds of men are registered, are to determine the decisions of the judgment. Says the prophet Daniel: "The judgment was set, and the books were opened." The revelator, describing the same scene, adds: "Another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." Revelation 20:12. (*GC* 480.2)

The **book of life** contains the names of all who have ever entered the service of God. Jesus bade His disciples: “Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.” Luke 10:20. Paul speaks of his faithful fellow workers, “whose names are in the book of life.” Philippians 4:3. Daniel, looking down to “a time of trouble, such as never was,” declares that God’s people shall be delivered, “everyone that shall be found written in the book.” And the revelator says that those only shall enter the city of God whose names “are written in the Lamb’s book of life.” Daniel 12:1; Revelation 21:27. (*GC 480.3*)

“A **book of remembrance**” is written before God, in which are recorded the good deeds of “them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name.” Malachi 3:16. Their words of faith, their acts of love, are registered in heaven.

Nehemiah refers to this when he says: “Remember me, O my God, ... and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God.”

Nehemiah 13:14. In the book of God’s remembrance every deed of righteousness is immortalized. There every temptation resisted, every evil overcome, every word of tender pity expressed, is faithfully chronicled. And every act of sacrifice, every suffering and sorrow endured for Christ’s sake, is recorded. Says the psalmist: “Thou tellest my wanderings: put Thou my tears into Thy bottle: are they not in Thy book?” Psalm 56:8. (GC 481.1)

There is a **record also of the sins** of men. “For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” “Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.” Says the Saviour: “By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” Ecclesiastes 12:14; Matthew 12:36, 37. The secret purposes and motives appear in the unerring register; for God “will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts.” 1 Corinthians 4:5. “Behold, it is written before Me, ... your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the Lord.” Isaiah 65:6, 7. (GC 481.2)

When Belshazzar had his great sacrilegious feast, there was present in the splendid halls a witness which he did not discern.

The revelers were drinking their wine, and partaking of their luxurious feast, and praising the gods of silver and gold, extolling their own wisdom, magnifying their deeds, and dishonoring God, but right over against the wall, facing the king, a bloodless hand was tracing the terrible characters testifying of his true

condition: “**Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.**” (*ST* December 29, 1887, par. 5)

The Lord is weighing character in the sanctuary today, and those who are careless and indifferent, rushing on in the paths of iniquity, will not stand the test. God has endowed us with reasoning powers, and he requires us to use them to his glory. He has given us this body, which he wishes us to preserve in perfect health, that we may render the best service to his cause. He has paid an infinite price for our redemption, and yet men and women dependent from day to day upon his mercies, for life, for health, for food, for all the blessings they enjoy, refuse to obey his laws, refuse to accept his Son as their Example and Saviour. (*ST* December 29, 1887, par. 6)

We cannot wait until the Judgment before we consent to deny self and to lift the cross. It will be too late then to form characters for Heaven. It is here and now that we must take sides with the humble, self-denying Redeemer. . . .

Our only safety is in constant communion with God. Our petitions should ascend in faith that he will keep us unspotted from the corruptions of the world. . . . (*ST* December 29, 1887, par. 9, 10)

Enoch walked with God three hundred years previous to his translation, and the state of the world was not more favorable for the perfection of Christian character then than it is today. How did Enoch walk with God? He educated his mind and heart to ever feel the presence of God, and when in perplexity his prayers would ascend to God to keep him, to teach him his will. “What shall I do to honor thee, my God?” was his prayer. His will was merged in the will of God, and his feet were constantly directed in the path of God’s commandments. Enoch was a representative of those who shall be on the earth when Christ shall come, who will be translated to Heaven and never taste of death. It is fitting that we pray, as did David, “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” (*ST* December 29, 1887, par. 11)

. . . in the great day of **final atonement** and **investigative judgment** the only cases considered are those of the professed people of God. The judgment of the wicked is a distinct and separate work, and takes place at a later period. (*GC* 480.1)

JUDGMENT OF THE
WICKED

During the thousand years between the first and the second resurrection, the judgment of the wicked takes place. Daniel declares that when the Ancient of days came, “judgment was given to the saints of the Most High.” At this time the righteous reign as kings and priests unto God. John in the Revelation says, “I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them.” “They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.” It is at this time that, as foretold by Paul, “the saints shall judge the world.” In union with Christ they judge the wicked, comparing their acts with the statute book, the Bible, and deciding every case according to the deeds done in the body. Satan also and evil angels are judged by Christ and his people. (*SW* March 14, 1905, par. 10)

At the close of the thousand years the second resurrection will take place. Then the wicked will be raised from the dead, and appear before God for the execution of “the judgment written.” Thus the Revelator, after describing the resurrection of the righteous, says, “The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.” (*SW* March 14, 1905, par. 11)

DISEASE

- ❖ Deuteronomy 7:15—And the Lord will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee; but will lay them upon all *them* that hate thee.
- ❖ Exodus 15:26—And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I *am* the Lord that healeth thee.
- ❖ Psalm 103:3—Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

- ❖ Diseases—*tahālū 'îm*—derived from *halu* which means sickness or grief.
- ❖ 2 Chronicles 16:12—Asa had a sickness in his foot
- ❖ Isaiah 53:10—it pleased to put him to grief
- ❖ 2 Chronicles 21:19—Jehoram died in great pain or agony
- ❖ Psalm 103:3—Sin and sickness closely related

- ❖ Exodus 15:26—*maḥăleb*—to be sick or faint, weak
- ❖ Injury or wounding, as in a battle
- ❖ Weak, as after a long journey
- ❖ Sick of heart or mind, grief
- ❖ Proverbs 13:12—hope deferred makes the heart sick
- ❖ Isaiah 53:12—put him to grief

- ❖ Deuteronomy 7:15—Sickness—*ḥōlî*—sick or faint, weak
- ❖ Physical injury or wounding, as in a battle
- ❖ Sick of heart or mind, feeling sorry, grief, heartsick
- ❖ Illness, sickness
- ❖ Diseases—*madweb*—illnesses, abnormal functioning

Through the agencies of nature, God is working, day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment, to keep us alive, to build up and restore us. When any part of the body sustains injury, a healing process is at once begun; nature's agencies are set at work to restore soundness. But the power working through these agencies is the **power of God**. All life-giving power is from Him. When one recovers from disease, **it is God who restores him.** (*CH 168.1*)

“They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.” This world is a vast lazar house, but Christ came to heal the sick, to proclaim deliverance to the captives of Satan. He was in Himself health and strength. **He imparted His life to the sick, the afflicted, those possessed of demons.** He turned away none who came to receive His healing power. He knew that those who petitioned Him for help had brought disease upon themselves; yet He did not refuse to heal them. And when **virtue from Christ** entered into these poor souls, they were convicted of sin, and many were healed of their spiritual disease, as well as of their physical maladies. The gospel still possesses the same power, and why should we not today witness the same results? (*DA 823.3*)

Christ feels the woes of every sufferer. When evil spirits rend a human frame, Christ feels the curse. When fever is burning up the life current, He feels the agony. And He is just as willing to heal the sick now as when He was personally on earth. Christ's servants are His representatives, the channels for His working. He desires through them to exercise His healing power. (*DA* 823.4)

Christ gave to Israel definite instruction in regard to their habits of life, and He assured them, “The Lord will take away from thee all sickness.” Deuteronomy 7:15. When they fulfilled the conditions, the promise was verified to them. “There was not one feeble person among their tribes.” Psalm 105:37.

These lessons are for us. There are conditions to be observed by all who would preserve health. All should learn what these conditions are. **The Lord is not pleased with ignorance in regard to His laws, either natural or spiritual.** We are to be workers together with God for the restoration of health to the body as well as to the soul. (*DA* 824.3, .4)

The sick are to be healed through the combined efforts of the human and the divine. Every gift, every power, that Christ promised to His disciples, He bestows upon those who will serve Him faithfully.—Letter 205, 1899. (*MM* 12.1)

THE BITTER WATERS
OF MARAH

So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they *were* bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? And he cried unto the Lord; and the Lord shewed him a tree, *which* when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them, (Exodus 15:22–25)

And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I *am* the Lord that healeth thee.

(Exodus 15:26)

From the Red Sea the hosts of Israel again set forth on their journey, under the guidance of the pillar of cloud. The scene around them was most dreary—bare, desolate-looking mountains, barren plains, and the sea stretching far away, its shores strewn with the bodies of their enemies; yet they were full of joy in the consciousness of freedom, and every thought of discontent was hushed. (*PP* 291.1)

In their horror and despair they reproached Moses for having led them in such a way, not remembering that the divine presence in that mysterious cloud had been leading him as well as them. In his grief at their distress Moses did what they had forgotten to do; he cried earnestly to God for help. “And the Lord showed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet.” Here the promise was given to Israel through Moses, “If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.” (*PP* 291.3)

From Marah the people journeyed to Elim, where they found “twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees.” Here they remained several days before entering the wilderness of Sin. When they had been a month absent from Egypt, they made their first encampment in the wilderness. Their store of provisions had now begun to fail. There was scanty herbage in the wilderness, and their flocks were diminishing. How was food to be supplied for these vast multitudes? Doubts filled their hearts, and again they murmured.

Even the rulers and elders of the people joined in complaining against the leaders of God's appointment: “Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.” (*PP* 292.1)

They had not as yet suffered from hunger; their present wants were supplied, but they feared for the future. They could not understand how these vast multitudes were to subsist in their travels through the wilderness, and in imagination they saw their children famishing. The Lord permitted difficulties to surround them, and their supply of food to be cut short, that their hearts might turn to Him who had hitherto been their Deliverer. If in their want they would call upon Him, He would still grant them manifest tokens of His love and care. He had promised that if they would obey His commandments, no disease should come upon them, and it was sinful unbelief on their part to anticipate that they or their children might die of hunger. (*PP* 292.2)

God had promised to be their God, to take them to Himself as a people, and to lead them to a large and good land; but **they were ready to faint** at every obstacle encountered in the way to that land. In a marvelous manner He had brought them out from their bondage in Egypt, that He might elevate and ennoble them and make them a praise in the earth. But it was necessary for them to encounter difficulties and to endure privations. God was bringing them from a state of degradation and fitting them to occupy an honorable place among the nations and to receive important and sacred trusts. Had they possessed faith in Him, in view of all that He had wrought for them, they would cheerfully have borne inconvenience, privation, and even real suffering; but they were unwilling to trust the Lord any further than they could witness the continual evidences of His power.

They forgot their bitter service in Egypt. (*PP* 292.3)

They forgot the goodness and power of God displayed in their behalf in their deliverance from bondage. They forgot how their children had been spared when the destroying angel slew all the first-born of Egypt. They forgot the grand exhibition of divine power at the Red Sea. They forgot that while they had crossed safely in the path that had been opened for them, the armies of their enemies, attempting to follow them, had been overwhelmed by the waters of the sea. They saw and felt only their present inconveniences and trials; and instead of saying, "God has done great things for us; whereas we were slaves, He is making of us a great nation," they talked of the hardness of the way, and wondered when their weary pilgrimage would end. (*PP* 292.3)

The history of the wilderness life of Israel was chronicled for the benefit of the Israel of God to the close of time. The record of God's dealings with the wanderers of the desert in all their marchings to and fro, in their exposure to hunger, thirst, and weariness, and in the striking manifestations of His power for their relief, is fraught with warning and instruction for His people in all ages. The varied experience of the Hebrews was a school of preparation for their promised home in Canaan. God would have His people in these days review with a humble heart and teachable spirit the trials through which ancient Israel passed, that they may be instructed in their preparation for the heavenly Canaan. (*PP* 293.1)

Many look back to the Israelites, and marvel at their unbelief and murmuring, feeling that they themselves would not have been so ungrateful; but when their faith is tested, even by little trials, they manifest no more faith or patience than did ancient Israel. When brought into strait places, they murmur at the process by which God has chosen to purify them. Though their present needs are supplied, many are unwilling to trust God for the future, and they are in constant anxiety lest poverty shall come upon them, and their children shall be left to suffer. Some are always anticipating evil or magnifying the difficulties that really exist, so that their eyes are blinded to the many blessings which demand their gratitude. The obstacles they encounter, instead of leading them to seek help from God, the only Source of strength, separate them from Him, because they awaken unrest and repining. (*PP* 293.2)

The Lord had a lesson to teach the children of Israel. **The waters of Marah were an object lesson, representing the diseases brought upon human beings because of sin.** It is no mystery that the inhabitants of the earth are suffering from disease of every stripe and type. It is because they transgress the law of God. Thus did the children of Israel.

They broke down the barriers which God in His providence had erected to preserve them from disease, that they might live in health and holiness and so learn obedience in their journeying through the wilderness. They journeyed under the special direction of Christ, who had given Himself as a sacrifice to preserve a people who would ever keep God in their remembrance, notwithstanding Satan's masterly temptations. Enshrouded in the pillar of cloud, it was Christ's desire to keep under His sheltering wing of preservation all who would do His will. (*MM 119.3*)

It was not by chance that in their journey the children of Israel came to Marah. Before they left Egypt the Lord began His lessons of instruction, that He might lead them to realize that He was their God, their Deliverer, their Protector. They murmured against Moses and against God, but still the Lord sought to show them that He would relieve all their perplexities if they would look to Him. The evils they met and passed through were part of God's great plan, whereby He desired to prove them. (*MM 120.1*)

“When they came to Marah, ... the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? And he cried unto the Lord; and the Lord showed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them, and said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians, for I am the Lord that healeth thee.”

Though invisible to human eyes, God was the leader of the Israelites, their mighty Healer. **He it was who put into the tree the properties which sweetened the waters.** Thus He desired to show them that by His power He could **cure the evils of the human heart.** (*MM* 120.2)