

How Shall We Wait?



SABBATH AFTERNOON

Read for This Week's Study: *Matt. 24:35–25:46, 2 Peter 3, James 2:14–26, John 4:35–38, 1 Cor. 3:6–8, Rev. 21:1–4.*

Memory Text: “Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality” (*Romans 12:11–13, NIV*).

For several years preceding the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, the Seventh-day Adventist churches in San Francisco and Oakland, California, were buzzing. Members were involved in visiting the sick and destitute. They found homes for orphans and work for the unemployed. They nursed the sick and taught the Bible from house to house. Members distributed Christian literature and gave classes on healthful living. The churches also conducted a school for the children in the basement of the Laguna Street meetinghouse. A workingmen’s home and medical mission were maintained. They had a health-food store along with a vegetarian café. The members had started ship mission work at the local port, and their ministers conducted meetings in large halls in the city from time to time.

Ellen G. White had called these churches the two “beehives” and was thrilled by their work (*Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, July 5, 1900). What powerful examples of what we should and could be doing now as we await the Second Coming. Our Lord is coming back; that we know. The crucial issue for us is: What are we doing while we wait?

On that answer hangs the destiny of souls.

* Study this week’s lesson to prepare for Sabbath, September 24.

While We Wait for Jesus

The disciples had just been admiring the glorious scene as the sun's rays glinted off the temple. Jesus, wanting to focus their attention on the realities facing the Christian church in the near future and the end of time, cryptically gave them a dose of reality by saying: "Do you see all these things? . . . Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down" (*Matt. 24:2, NIV*). Surprised by His comment, the disciples asked, "When will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" (*Matt. 24:3, NIV*). In Matthew 24:4–31, Jesus then tells them the things to expect to see unfold in the world before He returns.

In revealing the signs, Jesus warns, "But the end is still to come" (*Matt. 24:6, NIV*), and that "all these are the beginning of birth pains" (*Matt. 24:8, NIV*). The direct answer to the disciples' question comes in verse 14. "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (*Matt. 24:14, NIV*).

In this discourse, the first 35 verses in Matthew 24 motivate us to take the signs seriously, but Jesus also tells us *how we are to wait* for "the end of the age" (*Matt. 24:3, NIV*). In other words, we just don't sit there and wait for Him to come as we would sit at a bus stop and wait for the bus. No, we are given plenty to do as we wait for the Lord's second advent.

Read Matthew 24:36–25:46. Each one of these parables talks about what God's people should be doing as they await the second coming of Jesus. Summarize the essence of what the Lord is telling us here. Then we need to ask ourselves, both individually and as a church: *How well are we following the Lord's instructions for us in each of these parables?*

Jesus here begins to exhort His disciples about the way His true followers will wait for Him to come again. During this period Jesus' disciples will always be ready. They will show love, care, and respect to each other while waiting; they will stay alert, prepare ahead, and be responsible for their own spiritual condition. They will multiply the resources that God has placed in their hands, invest talents and money in God's cause, respect the true character of their loving God, and care for "the least of these."

Revival and Reformation While We Wait

Read 2 Peter 3. Summarize the teachings in this chapter that pertain to revival and reformation. How do these verses fit in with the topic we have been studying all quarter?

God's desire is that "everyone" will "come to repentance" (*2 Pet. 3:9, NIV*). Though we cannot do the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing people to repentance, we are called to reach them with the message of salvation, which, if accepted, will lead to repentance.

We, too, as church members, need to be in an attitude of repentance. Repentance is part of the process of revival and reformation. Revival means to come back to life, to be renewed, restored. Reformation means to be reshaped, reformed—to be a new creation (*2 Cor. 5:17*). "A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work."—Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 121.

The "how should we wait" passages in yesterday's study illustrate conditions and outcomes of revival and reformation. For example, all 10 virgins needed to be revived, awakened out of sleep (*Matt. 25:1–13*). The foolish virgins needed to increase their capacity for the Holy Spirit in their lives. When we humble ourselves, die to self, unselfishly pray, study God's Word, and lovingly share it with others in word and loving deeds, we increase our capacity for an infilling of the Holy Spirit in latter-rain power. However, it is possible to study the Bible for hours and still be a selfish person. We could pray for revival and the latter rain but selfishly want it only for ourselves. *Revival always leads to unselfish concern for others*. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we will be reformed into passionate mission- and service-centered disciples.

We need revival and reformation in our prayers, in Bible study, and in our focus on asking for the Holy Spirit in latter-rain abundance. But as a church we also need revival and reformation in our attitudes and methods. We need revival and reformation in our attitude and actions toward "the least of these." All this has been the focus of this quarter's lessons.

How can we guard ourselves against complacency in regard to the second coming of Jesus? That is, as the years go by, how can we always keep before ourselves the reality and urgency of the Lord's return?

The Mission of the Church While We Wait

Read James 2:14–26. In what ways do these verses encapsulate who we are and why we are here?

In Sunday’s study, the disciples start out pointing to the beauty of the temple buildings. Jesus points their attention to the condition of the church within and its mission to an ending world. The fact is that the church exists because there is a mission, and not vice versa.

The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as expressed in the General Conference *Working Policy* (A 05) is “to make disciples of all people, communicating the everlasting gospel [gospel of the kingdom (*Matthew 24:14*)] in the context of the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14:6–12, leading them to accept Jesus as personal Savior and unite with His remnant church, discipling them to serve Him as Lord, and preparing them for His soon return.” Preaching, teaching, and healing are the suggested methods to pursue this mission. Under “Healing” the *Working Policy* says: “Affirming the biblical principles of the well-being of the whole person, we make the preservation of health and the healing of the sick a priority and through our ministry to the poor and oppressed, cooperate with the Creator in His compassionate work of restoration.”

This quarter began with the concept that Jesus wants to restore His image in humanity and empower us as His followers to be instruments of wholistic restoration in our communities. “The world needs today what it needed nineteen hundred years ago—a revelation of Christ. A great work of reform is demanded, and it is only through the grace of Christ that the work of restoration, physical, mental, and spiritual, can be accomplished.”—Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 143.

After hearing a seminar that presented the ministry of Jesus as a model and mission for His end-time church, a church member made this statement: “In our part of the world, we are not very open to new ideas and new ways of doing things. What we have heard this week about following the ministry method of Jesus actually is not new. It’s an old idea. We just forgot it.”

“Faith without works is dead.” How have you discovered the reality of how closely linked faith and works are? In what ways do works increase your faith?

Preparing for the Final Harvest While We Wait

Jesus used farming language in His teaching about the kingdom, as pointed out in lesson 5. As we have seen, farming is not merely an event; it is a patient *process*! It is a regularly repeated cycle with different stages and different jobs for different people at different times. We need to be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit and the providences of God in regard to how we can be used by the Lord in the process of preparing the ground, planting seeds, and reaping the harvest.

Read John 4:35–38. What kind of imagery is being used there, and what is the message to us in regard to how we should work for others?

The fact is, we don't know people's hearts. We don't know how the Holy Spirit has been working in their lives. We might look at various people and think that they have a long way to go before being ready to be harvested when, in reality, all they need is someone to urge them to make a commitment to Jesus. There is a battle for the heart and mind of every human being, and God is calling us to help people choose Him.

Read 1 Corinthians 3:6–8. What is the message to us here in the context of outreach?

In his own way, Paul is saying here what Jesus said in the previous example. The work of outreach is like the work of a farmer. We might not all be doing the same tasks, but that work is still a crucial part of the process of reaching out and winning souls. And though we are to be used by God in various capacities, in the end it is God alone who can bring about the conversion of a soul.

How can we learn to be thankful and humbled by whatever role God has given us in the process of ministering to others? Why is it truly a privilege?

The Wait Is Over

Many years ago, English author Charles Dickens wrote a book called *A Tale of Two Cities*. Those two cities were London and Paris. In a sense, it could be said that the Bible is also a tale of two cities. In this case, the two cities are Babylon and Jerusalem.

In Revelation 14:8 and Revelation 18, the apostle John describes Babylon. She has been the home of demons and the haunt of evil spirits. She has caused every nation to commit spiritual adultery. Her doom has been pronounced, and she has been declared “fallen.” This city, a symbol of evil and apostasy and rebellion against God, will one day be defeated and destroyed.

Read Revelation 21:1–4. How does the New Jerusalem contrast with Babylon?

The second city is the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, described in Revelation 21 and 22. This city houses those who have chosen the Bridegroom and rejected the selfishness and spiritual adulteries of Satan and his followers. By God’s grace, the redeemed have obeyed His commandments and reflected the faith of Jesus (*Rev. 14:12*). Their patient endurance and their eagerness to embrace the ministry of Jesus provided a taste of the kingdom of heaven while on earth. They have been saved through faith in Jesus; His righteousness alone made them worthy of heaven. Their care for “the least of these” (*Matt. 25:40*) has been the outward manifestation of that saving faith.

By the blood of the Lamb (*Revelation 5*), the church’s role in compassionate restoration has changed to jubilant celebration (*see Rev. 5:13, 14*). In that happy Holy City, “God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away” (*Rev. 21:4, NKJV*). True peace has been restored. The full restoration of the image of God, mentally, spiritually, and physically, has taken place. The great controversy is over, and from “the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love.”—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 678.

Read Revelation 22:21. In what way does that verse, the last one in the Bible, capture the essence of all that we believe?

Further Thought: Read Matthew 5:16; Colossians 3:17; Hebrews 13:15, 16. Read Ellen G. White, “On the Mount of Olives,” pp. 627–636, and reread “ ‘The Least of These My Brethren,’ ” pp. 637–641, in *The Desire of Ages*.

Jesus told us what the signs of the end would be before He returned, and they are not pretty. Wars, rumors of wars, pestilence, et cetera. If people often use the excuse of evil to reject God, they certainly have plenty of excuses now, and they will have more excuses as we get nearer to the end. Thus, it becomes even more crucial for God’s people, those who claim to be His followers, to reflect His character to the world and to help people get a better view of what God is like. “If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one.”—Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 189. What a simple yet powerful statement in regard to outreach and ministry to others. While we wait for Jesus’ second coming, He expects members of His church to preach and live the whole gospel; to invest ourselves and our resources in His work; to love, respect, and care for people; and to open our lives for the Holy Spirit in His fullness. That’s a witness that all the arguments in the world can’t nullify.

Discussion Questions:

- 1 In class, talk about the difference between what it would be like living in “Babylon” as opposed to living in “Jerusalem.” What would be the major differences between the two cities? That is, where is the major difference to be found—in what the places look like or in who lives in them?
- 2 The great question for Christians is not “Do works have a role in the Christian faith?” Of course they do. Instead, the question is “If works cannot save us, then what is their role in the Christian faith?” How do we answer that question, especially in the context of reaching out and ministering to others in need?
- 3 How are we waiting for Jesus to return? That is, what are we doing in our lives that reveals the reality of our belief in His return? Why should we be living differently from those who don’t believe in the Second Coming?

A Changed Heart: Part 3

by AGNES MUKARWEGO and ALITA BYRD, Rwanda

My husband invented other things for me to do to keep me away from church. I thought, *He might keep me from attending church, but he cannot keep me from praying.* I told God about my husband's attempts to keep me from attending church, and asked God to make his heart softer toward religion.

A few weeks later I returned to the church, and this time my husband didn't hit me. Then I went every Sabbath, and I began reading the Bible to our children, and my husband didn't say anything. He began noticing that on Friday the house was neat and clean, the children were bathed, and food was prepared for the next day. He noticed that I was happier and that our home was happier. One Friday evening, he came home to find the Sabbath preparations complete, and the children gathered for worship. I invited him to sit down with us.

"I see that your life is different now, and you are happier," he said. "This way of living is better." While he seldom joined us for prayers, he never again forbade us from worshipping.

I wanted my husband to witness my baptism, but he refused, saying, "I don't have time for such things." I asked him again on the Sabbath I was baptized, but he still refused. However, he said I could invite my friends home afterward if I wished. "I'll stay home and welcome your friends when they come," he said.

I wasn't sure what to expect, but I brought friends home from church. My husband welcomed them, and I was amazed to hear what he told them: "My wife has changed. I want to thank you who helped her find God, because I see the difference that God has made in her life and our home."

I was thrilled with his words! I thank God for changing my husband's heart and his attitude.

My husband never again forbade me to attend church, and sometimes he went with us. He died last year never having openly given his life to God. But I know that God sees what we cannot see, and I pray that one day I will meet him in heaven when Jesus comes. In the meantime, I thank God for lifting me up from despair and giving me hope and peace in my life.

AGNES MUKARWEGO is an active lay worker in Rwanda. She shares her faith with others wherever she goes and has led many to salvation in Jesus through her testimony. ALITA BYRD is a writer living in London, England.

The Lesson in Brief

► **Key Text:** *James 2:14–26*

► **The Student Will:**

Know: See clearly that as Seventh-day Adventists proclaim the second coming of Jesus, they should also be revealing the love of Jesus in their words and actions.

Feel: Gain a fresh appreciation of our responsibilities while we wait for Jesus' return.

Do: Be challenged to find ways to actively support and, where possible, be personally involved in urban mission.

► **Learning Outline:**

I. Know: Waiting and Watching

A Many people focus on the “when” of Christ’s coming. As Adventists we know well from our own history the danger of trying to set dates for His return. How can we balance the expectation of His return with the command, “Occupy till I come” (*Luke 19:13*)?

II. Feel: Patiently Waiting

A How can we keep the urgency and importance of Christ’s return in our hearts when it feels as if He is delaying His coming?

B What would you say to someone who has been “working for the Lord” for years and feels there has been no fruit from his or her labor?

III. Do: Active Waiting

A Take time to pray that God will give you wisdom regarding how to best use your time as you “occupy” while you wait for Christ’s return.

B What are the three types of thorns that Jesus says can choke the life out of the word (*Mark 4:18, 19*)? What can we do to stop those thorns from developing in our lives as we wait for Christ’s return?

► **Summary:** The gospel of Jesus Christ is not some esoteric intellectual religion of the mind or spirit—somehow separated from our bodies or from real life. Waiting for Jesus’ second coming isn’t primarily a passive state; it’s an active stance wherein we are called to demonstrate God’s love for the world in practical ways.

Learning Cycle

►STEP 1—Motivate

Spotlight on Scripture: *James 2:26*

Key Concept for Spiritual Growth: As we wait for Jesus' second coming, just believing the right things is not enough. The apostle James reminds us that even demons believe (*James 2:19*). Belief must be combined with action; our doctrines must influence the way we lead our lives of mission for God.

Just for Teachers: For centuries within the Christian church, there have been debates about the proper balance between faith and works. This tension has also been the subject of discussion within the Seventh-day Adventist Church. As you teach the lesson this week, explore the biblical teaching of salvation by faith but also how faith is clearly revealed in the way we live. Discuss how in the lead-up to Christ's coming, we need to be witnesses, not only in word but also in action. Discuss with class members this well-known statement from Ellen G. White: "The strongest argument in favor of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 470.

Opening Discussion: French acrobat Jean François Gravelet, better known as Charles Blondin, achieved great fame in the mid-1800s for his spectacular tightrope crossings of Niagara Falls. Stories abound of his confident performances on the 1,300-foot-long tightrope, strung 160 feet above the falls, without a safety net. On one occasion he carried a small stove and utensils on his back, stopped halfway across, made an omelet, and then proceeded to lower the freshly cooked breakfast to passengers on a boat below. He also made the crossing on stilts, blindfolded, and in a sack. It's estimated that in his lifetime he made the crossing more than three hundred times.

On one occasion Blondin reportedly transported a sack of potatoes in a wheelbarrow that he pushed back and forth on the tightrope. He then bantered with the crowd, asking if they thought he could push a person to the other side in the wheelbarrow. Although the consensus seemed to be yes, when he asked for a volunteer, nobody was willing to take him up on the offer.

Although the truth of that particular story can't be verified, we do know that he carried his manager across on his back—a feat that he later, at age 65, performed with his son and with another volunteer.

Consider This: What does it mean to “get into the wheelbarrow” in our Christian lives? How can we avoid having a faith that is just “head knowledge”? What difference would it make in our communities if we stopped just talking about wonderful feats on the tightrope and actually got into the wheelbarrow?

►STEP 2—Explore

Just for Teachers: Often we as Adventists focus on the timing of Christ’s coming rather than what we’re supposed to be doing while we wait for Him. Remind the class that, while we should never lose sight of Christ’s promise to return, He is also vitally concerned with how we live while we wait.

Bible Commentary

I. Faith That Works *(Review with your class James 2:14–19.)*

In his self-titled book, the apostle James, leader of the Jerusalem church, shows no interest in theoretical religion. His concern is with how belief affects behavior: “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life” (*James 3:13, NIV*); “Faith without deeds is dead” (*James 2:26, NIV*); “Do not merely listen to the word. . . . Do what it says” (*James 1:22, NIV*); “Show me your faith without deeds,” he says, almost playfully, “and I will show you my faith by my deeds” (*James 2:18, NIV*).

James’s theme of practical Christianity follows the emphasis of his brother, Jesus. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says to “let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, which is in heaven” (*Matt. 5:16*). In fact, He calls His followers “the light of the world”—which shouldn’t be hidden (*Matt. 5:14*). For Jesus, those who claimed to believe in Him would naturally demonstrate their faith in the way they lived.

Consider This: The apostle Peter talks about Christians who are “ineffective and unproductive” in their knowledge of Jesus Christ (*2 Pet. 1:8, NIV*). What does Peter suggest in this passage that we do in order to prevent this from happening to us?

II. Keep Watch *(Review Matthew 24:37–39 with your class.)*

In Matthew 24, Jesus describes the way in which people in the days of Noah lived. They were eating, drinking, and marrying—and seemingly

oblivious about what was about to come upon them. In other words, they were living carefree and carelessly. Jesus says that this is exactly how things will be just before His second coming—people will be engaged in their own interests and activities, totally oblivious to the needs of people around them.

Instead, Jesus tells His followers to “‘keep watch’ ” and “‘be ready’ ” (*Matt. 24:42, 44, NIV*). In one sense, this means to remain mentally and spiritually alert to the fact that Jesus will be coming again. But it also means more than this. The angel asked the disciples, “Why stand ye gazing up into heaven?” (*Acts 1:11*). While the disciples must always remember the wonderful days while He was present with them on earth, they had more to do than just stand around, gazing into the sky. They had work to accomplish. They, and we, have the task Jesus gave: “Occupy till I come” (*Luke 19:13*).

In Matthew 25, Jesus outlines how to occupy, or “do business,” while we wait for Him to come. First, the parable of the ten virgins teaches us to make sure we have oil in our lamps. Second, the parable of the talents tells us to use wisely the gifts God has given us. Third, the parable of the sheep and the goats reminds us that true religion, in the words of James, is “to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world” (*James 1:27, NIV*). Jesus describes those who are truly following Him at the end of time as feeding the hungry, giving the thirsty something to drink, being hospitable to strangers, clothing the naked, caring for the sick, and visiting those in prison (*Matt. 25:35, 36*).

Consider This: Discuss with the class what it means to wait and watch. How can we do this in our busy lives? Invite the class to suggest practical ways in which they can wait and watch this week.

►STEP 3—Apply

Just for Teachers: Explore with your class the experience of waiting for Jesus’ return. What does it mean in practical terms to wait and watch for His return? How do we keep proper focus?

Activity: The old story is told about the boy watching sheep and getting bored. To break the monotony one day, he yelled loudly, “Wolf! Wolf! Wolf!” The people from the local village ran to help the boy, only to discover there was no wolf. The young shepherd thought this was very funny, and he laughed and laughed. The villagers, however, weren’t amused. “Don’t cry ‘wolf’ when there’s no wolf,” they sternly lectured the boy.

But it wasn’t too long before the boy was again bored, and so he yelled at the top of his voice, “Wolf! Wolf! Wolf!” To his great delight, he saw the villagers race up the hill to help him. Again they were angry to discover there

was no wolf, and they remonstrated with the boy. But he just laughed at how he had tricked them.

Some time later, the young shepherd saw a real wolf coming near his sheep. Panicking, he leapt in the air and yelled as loud as he could, “Wolf! Wolf! The wolf is attacking my sheep! Wolf!”

But this time the villagers weren’t going to be fooled. Ignoring his cries, they continued about their work. The boy continued to cry, “Wolf!” but it was just background noise to the villagers.

As evening approached, the people noticed that the boy hadn’t returned with the sheep. Someone went looking for him and found the boy sitting on a rock, crying. “Why didn’t you come? Why didn’t you come? I cried, ‘Wolf!’ but nobody came.”

The man tried to comfort the boy but said, “Let this be a lesson to you: nobody believes a liar, even when they’re telling the truth.”

Consider This: For more than one hundred fifty years, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been talking about the nearness of Christ’s return. How can we avoid appearing like the boy who cried wolf? How does waiting “actively”—following Christ’s method of ministry while we wait—add to the credibility of our message about the Second Coming?

►STEP 4—Create

Just for Teachers: In this week’s class, emphasize that waiting for Jesus’ return should be an active exercise, not a passive one. We are told to “occupy”—a verb—while we wait. Discuss what occupying means. Take care to keep the discussion practical rather than theoretical.

Activity: Depending on the size of your class, invite members individually or in small groups to think of at least five practical steps they can take in the following week to “actively wait.” It may be a private strategy to make at least one person each day smile. It might be to show an act of random kindness to at least one person per day. It might be to consciously strengthen their relationship with a neighbor they already know or start a relationship with one they don’t. Invite the class to share and discuss the ideas they have listed.

Despite science's claims, many find the idea of an eternally existing God the most satisfying explanation for Creation. Even with logic and reason on our side, there's still the ever-present problem of evil.

This quarter's study on *Job* by Clifford Goldstein deals with the difficult question of why there is so much suffering if God exists.

Job shows that the natural and supernatural are inseparably linked and is the story of us all. We all suffer in ways that make no sense. *Job*'s story appears in the context of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, which is portrayed in a literal sense.

Our study examines *Job*'s story, close up, in the narrative's immediate drama, and from a distance. We know not only how the book ends but also the bigger background in which it unfolds. We try to understand why we live in a world of evil, but more important how we are to live in such a world.

Despite evil's existence, we can rest assured in the solution: Jesus Christ, in "whom we have redemption through His blood" (*Eph. 1:7*).

Lesson 1—The End

The Week at a Glance:

SUNDAY: **Happily Ever After?** (*Job 42:10–17*)

MONDAY: **Unhappy Endings** (*Gen. 4:8; Acts 7:59, 60*)

TUESDAY: **The (Partial) Restoration** (*Job 42:10*)

WEDNESDAY: **The Final Kingdom** (*Dan. 2:44, 7:18*)

THURSDAY: **The Resurrection and the Life** (*Job 14:14, 15*)

Memory Text—*John 11:25*

Sabbath Gem: *Job*'s story has a happy ending despite all of his suffering. As we begin our study of the book of *Job*, we also are reminded of the ultimate hope we have in Jesus—of His second coming and being with Him eternally.

Lesson 2—The Great Controversy

The Week at a Glance:

SUNDAY: **A Little Heaven on Earth** (*Job 1:1–4*)

MONDAY: **Cosmic Conflict** (*Job 1:6–12*)

TUESDAY: **The Conflict on Earth** (*Gen. 3:1–4, Rev. 12:9*)

WEDNESDAY: **Job as a Microcosm** (*Isa. 14:12–14*)

THURSDAY: **Answers at the Cross** (*John 12:31, 32; Heb. 2:14*)

Memory Text—*Zechariah 3:2*

Sabbath Gem: The great-controversy theme forms a template that can help us to better understand "the total message" of the Bible, especially the plan of salvation.

Lessons for the Visually Impaired The regular *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* is available free each month in braille and on audio CD to sight-impaired and physically handicapped persons who cannot read normal ink print. This includes individuals who, because of arthritis, multiple sclerosis, paralysis, accident, and so forth, cannot hold or focus on normal ink-print publications. Contact Christian Record Services for the Blind, Box 6097, Lincoln, NE 68506-0097. Phone: 402-488-0981; e-mail: info@christianrecord.org; Web site: www.christianrecord.org.