God is Passionate and Compassionate

Lesson 4, 1st Quarter January 18-24, 2025.



Memory Text:

Sabbath Afternoon January 18

"Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." KIV — Isaiah 49:15

yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." KJV — Isaiah 49:15

"If ye, then, being human and evil, "know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your

heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" Luke 11:13. The Holy Spirit, the representative of

Himself, is the greatest of all gifts. All "good things" are comprised in this. The Creator Himself can give us nothing greater, nothing better. When we beseech the Lord to pity us in our distress, and to guide us by His Holy Spirit, He will never turn away our prayer. It is possible even for a parent to turn away from his hungry child, but God can never reject the cry of the needy and longing heart. With what wonderful tenderness He has described His love! To those who in days of darkness feel that God is unmindful of them, this is the message from the Father's heart: "Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands." Isaiah 49:14-16. MB 132.1

"Every promise in the word of God furnishes us with subject matter for prayer, presenting the pledged word of Jehovah as our assurance. Whatever spiritual blessing we need, it is our privilege to claim through Jesus. We may tell the Lord, with the simplicity of a child, exactly what we need. We may state to Him our temporal matters,

asking Him for bread and raiment as well as for the bread of life and the robe of Christ's righteousness. Your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things, and you are invited to ask Him concerning them. It is through the name of Jesus that every favor is received. God will honor that name, and will supply your necessities from the riches of His liberality." MB 133.1

Read Psalm 103:13, Isaiah 49:15, and Jeremiah 31:20. What do these depictions convey about the nature and depth of God's compassion?

Sunday, January 19

"Jesus calls to every wanderer, "My son, give Me thine heart." [Proverbs 23:26.] "Return, ye backsliding children,

toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye." Zechariah 2:8. GC 626.3

More than a Mother's Love

tenderly His heart yearns over us in all our trials and temptations. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." [Psalm 103:13.] The mother might sooner forget her child than God could forget one soul that trusts Him." GW 209.2

and I will heal your backslidings." [Jeremiah 3:22.] The youth cannot be truly happy without the love of Jesus. He is

waiting with pitying tenderness to hear the confessions of the wayward, and to accept their penitence. He

watches for some return of gratitude from them, as the mother watches for the smile of recognition from her

beloved babe. The great God teaches us to call Him Father. He would have us understand how earnestly and

"Will the Lord forget His people in this trying hour? Did He forget faithful Noah when judgments were visited upon the antediluvian world? Did He forget Lot when the fire came down from heaven to consume the cities of the plain? Did He forget Joseph surrounded by idolaters in Egypt? Did He forget Elijah when the oath of Jezebel threatened him with the fate of the prophets of Baal? Did He forget Jeremiah in the dark and dismal pit of his prison house? Did He forget the three worthies in the fiery furnace? or Daniel in the den of lions? GC 626.2 "Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands.' Isaiah 49:14-16. The Lord of hosts has said: "He that

powers; and angels will come to them in lonely cells, bringing light and peace from heaven. The prison will be as a palace; for the rich in faith dwell there, and the gloomy walls will be lighted up with heavenly light as when Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises at midnight in the Philippian dungeon. GC 627.1

"God's judgments will be visited upon those who are seeking to oppress and destroy His people. His long forbearance with the wicked emboldens men in transgression, but their punishment is nonetheless certain and

terrible because it is long delayed. "The Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, He shall be wroth as in the valley

of Gibeon, that He may do His work, His strange work; and bring to pass His act, His strange act." Isaiah 28:21. To

death of the wicked." Ezekiel 33:11. The Lord is "merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness

and truth, ... forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." Yet He will "by no means clear the guilty." "The Lord is

our merciful God the act of punishment is a strange act. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the

"Though enemies may thrust them into prison, yet dungeon walls cannot cut off the communication between

their souls and Christ. One who sees their every weakness, who is acquainted with every trial, is above all earthly

slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked." Exodus 34:6, 7; Nahum 1:3. By terrible things in righteousness He will vindicate the authority of His downtrodden law. The severity of the retribution awaiting the transgressor may be judged by the Lord's reluctance to execute justice. The nation with which He bears long, and which He will not smite until it has filled up the measure of its iniquity in God's account, will finally drink the cup of wrath unmixed with mercy." GC 627.2

"Tenderly had the Lord dealt with Israel in their deliverance from Egyptian bondage and in their journey to the Promised Land. "In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Isaiah 63:9. PK 312.1

Monday, January 20

"My presence shall go with thee,' was the promise given during the journey through the wilderness. Exodus 33:14. This assurance was accompanied by a marvelous revelation of Jehovah's character, which enabled Moses

Gut-Wrenching Love

suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." Exodus 34:6, 7. PK 312.2

"It was upon his knowledge of the long-sufferance of Jehovah and of His infinite love and mercy, that Moses

to proclaim to all Israel the goodness of God, and to instruct them fully concerning the attributes of their invisible

King. "The Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-

based his wonderful plea for the life of Israel when, on the borders of the Promised Land, they refused to

Hosea 14:1-4. What do these verses reveal about God's steadfast. Read Hosea 11:1–9. How does the imagery

in these verses bring to life the way God loves and cares for His people?

advance in obedience to the command of God. At the height of their rebellion the Lord had declared, "I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them;" and He had proposed to make of the descendants of Moses "a greater nation and mightier than they." Numbers 14:12. But the prophet pleaded the marvelous providences and promises of God in behalf of the chosen nation. And then, as the strongest of all pleas, he urged the love of God for fallen man. See verses 17-19. PK 312.3

"Graciously the Lord responded, "I have pardoned according to thy word." And then He imparted to Moses, in the

merciful kindness and tender love—that which Moses had pleaded in behalf of Israel—were to be revealed to all

form of a prophecy, a knowledge of His purpose concerning the final triumph of Israel. "As truly as I live," He

declared, "all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." Verses 20, 21. God's glory, His character, His

mankind. And this promise of Jehovah was made doubly sure; it was confirmed by an oath. As surely as God lives and reigns, His glory should be declared "among the heathen, His wonders among all people." Psalm 96:3. PK 313.1

"It was concerning the future fulfillment of this prophecy that Isaiah had heard the shining seraphim singing before the throne, "The whole earth is full of His glory." Isaiah 6:3. The prophet, confident of the certainty of these words, himself afterward boldly declared of those who were bowing down to the images of wood and stone, "They shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." Isaiah 35:2." PK 313.2

Tuesday, January 21

The Compassion of Jesus

Read Matthew 9:36, Matthew 14:14, Mark 1:41, Mark 6:34, and Luke 7:13. See also Matthew 23:37. How do

"In His parting conversation with His disciples on the night before the crucifixion the Saviour made no reference

to the suffering that He had endured and must yet endure. He did not speak of the humiliation that was before

Him, but sought to bring to their minds that which would strengthen their faith, leading them to look forward to

followers than He had promised; that from Him would flow forth love and compassion, cleansing the soul temple,

the joys that await the overcomer. He rejoiced in the consciousness that He could and would do more for His

and making men like Him in character; that His truth, armed with the power of the Spirit, would go forth

these verses shed light on the way Christ was moved by the plight of people?

"The work of gaining salvation is one of copartnership, a joint operation. There is to be co-operation between God and the repentant sinner. This is necessary for the formation of right principles in the character. Man is to make earnest efforts to overcome that which hinders him from attaining to perfection. But he is wholly dependent upon God for success. Human effort of itself is not sufficient. Without the aid of divine power it avails nothing.

Wednesday, January 22

A Jealous God?

earthly, temporal affairs? RH June 13, 1882, par. 7

foolishness with God. RH June 13, 1882, par. 9

Compassion and Passionate

conquering and to conquer." AA 23.1

God works and man works. Resistance of temptation must come from man, who must draw his power from God. On the one side there is infinite wisdom, compassion, and power; on the other, weakness, sinfulness, absolute helplessness." AA 482.2 "Jesus does not present to His followers the hope of attaining earthly glory and riches, of living a life free from

themselves against the Prince of Peace. His every word and act revealed divine compassion, and His unlikeness to the world provoked the bitterest hostility." AA 576.1

"But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Matthew 6:15.

Nothing can justify an unforgiving spirit. He who is unmerciful toward others shows that he himself is not a

partaker of God's pardoning grace. In God's forgiveness the heart of the erring one is drawn close to the great

heart of Infinite Love. The tide of divine compassion flows into the sinner's soul, and from him to the souls of

others. The tenderness and mercy that Christ has revealed in His own precious life will be seen in those who

trial. Instead He calls upon them to follow Him in the path of self-denial and reproach. He who came to redeem

the world was opposed by the united forces of evil. In an unpitying confederacy, evil men and evil angels arrayed

become sharers of His grace. But "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Romans 8:9. He is alienated from God, fitted only for eternal separation from Him.:" COL 251.1

First Corinthians 13:4 declares that "love is not jealous" (RSV). How could it be, then, that God is a "jealous God"? Read 2 Corinthians 11:2 and consider the way God's people were unfaithful to Him throughout the narratives of the Bible (see, for example, Ps. 78:58). What light do these passages shed on understanding divine "jealousy"?

"Great is the sacrifice by which Christ has purchased his people; great are the privileges set before us in the gospel. A corresponding zeal and devotion are in return required from us. The great apostle writes to his Corinthian brethren, "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I

may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his

subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." And again he bids them, "Be ye

followers of God as dear children," and "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called," "being fruitful in

every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." But where is the simplicity and fervent piety which

given to copying the character of Christ? How do they compare with the attention and interest given to our

"Let the words of Christ come home to the world-loving professors of godliness, "Except ye be converted, and

Heaven as a little child, shall in nowise enter therein." We should teach our children lessons of simplicity and

glory should be held paramount; his love should be the mainspring of every action. RH June 13, 1882, par. 8

Christ's kingdom. The wise and prudent of this world cannot comprehend it. The wisdom of this world is

trust. We should teach them to love, and fear, and obey their Creator. In all the plans and purposes of life, his

"Worldly wisdom, intellectual ability, mental training, will not give the knowledge requisite for an entrance into

become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of Heaven. Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of

should be seen among those who make so exalted a profession? How much careful thought and study are now

"No matter how high the profession, he whose heart is not filled with love for God and his fellow men is not a true disciple of Christ. Though he should possess great faith and have power even to work miracles, yet without love his faith would be worthless. He might display great liberality; but should he, from some other motive than

of others. AA 319.2

enthusiast or an ambitious hypocrite. AA 318.2

Read 1 Corinthians 13:4–8. In what ways does this passage call us to reflect God's compassionate and amazing love in our relationships with others?

Thursday, January 23

patience, love, and submission to God's will. AA 319.1

"Charity "doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." Christ-like love places the most favorable construction on the motives and acts of others. It does not needlessly expose

their faults; it does not listen eagerly to unfavorable reports, but seeks rather to bring to mind the good qualities

"Love "rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things,

"But God would not have rich or poor entertain the idea for a moment that he is dependent upon them, nor that

endureth all things." This love "never faileth." It can never lose its value; it is a heavenly attribute. As a precious

treasure, it will be carried by its possessor through the portals of the city of God. AA 319.3

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." AA 319.4

genuine love, bestow all his goods to feed the poor, the act would not commend him to the favor of God. In his

zeal he might even meet a martyr's death, yet if not actuated by love, he would be regarded by God as a deluded

"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." The purest

joy springs from the deepest humiliation. The strongest and noblest characters are built on the foundation of

their liberalities can in any case supply defects of Christian character. Liberality is but one of the traits which are characteristic of a Christian. The inspired apostle says, "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity [love], it profiteth me nothing." Charity is thus defined: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth." The character of a tree bearing all these fruits may be readily discerned. For "by their fruits ye shall know them." As followers of Jesus Christ, we must be wide awake to discern with heavenly eyesight the devices of Satan. God has

given us his word as a chart to mark out our way to the eternal shore. With the Bible for our guide, aided by our

own reason kept clear by strictly temperate habits, we may be able to acquit ourselves like servants of the Master who have duties to perform and eternal interests to secure." RH October 31, 1878, par. 11

Friday, January 24

Further Thought

"In Christ is the tenderness of the shepherd, the affection of the parent, and the matchless grace of the compassionate Saviour. His blessings He presents in the most alluring terms. He is not content merely to announce these blessings; He presents them in the most attractive way, to excite a desire to possess them. So His servants are to present the riches of the glory of the unspeakable Gift. The wonderful love of Christ will melt and subdue hearts, when the mere reiteration of doctrines would accomplish nothing. "Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God." "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! ... He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom." Isaiah 40:1, 9-11. Tell the people of Him who is "the Chiefest among ten thousand," and the One "altogether lovely." The Song of Solomon 5:10, 16. Words alone cannot tell it. Let it be reflected in the character and manifested in the life. Christ is sitting for His portrait in every disciple. Every one God has predestinated to be "conformed to the image of His Son." Romans 8:29. In every one Christ's long-suffering love,

His holiness, meekness, mercy, and truth are to be manifested to the world." DA 826.3

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